THE

BRITISH NOVELISTS;

WITH

AN ESSAY;

AND

PREFACES,

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,

BY

MRS. BARBAULD.

VOL. X.

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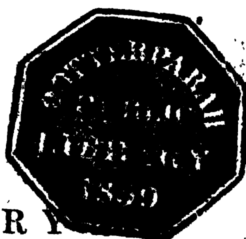
1810.

THE

HISTORY

OF

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON, BART.



LETTER I.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS LUCY SELBY.

Wednesday night, March 1.

MR. Fowler set out yesterday for Gloucestershire, where he has an estate. He proposes to go from thence to Caermarthen, to the worthy Sir Rowland. He paid a visit to Mr. Reeves, and desired him to present to me his best wishes and respects. He declared, that he could not possibly take leave of me, though he doubted not but I would receive him with goodness, as he called it. But it was *that* which cut him to the heart: so kind, and so cruel, he said, he could not bear it.

I hope, poor Mr. Fowler will be more happy than I could make him. Methinks, I could have been half-glad to have seen him before he went: and yet *but* half-glad: since, had he shewn much concern, I should have been pained.

Take now, my dear, an account of what passed this day in St. James's Square.

There were at Sir Charles Grandison's, besides Lord and Lady L. the young Lord G. one of Miss Grandison's humble servants; Mr. Everard Grandison; Miss Emily Jervois, a young lady of about fourteen, a ward of Sir Charles; and Dr. Bartlett, a divine; of whom more by-and-by.

Sir Charles conducted us into the drawing-room adjoining to the dining-room; where only were his two sisters. They received my cousins and me with looks of love.

I will tell you, said Sir Charles, your company, before I present them to you. Lord L. is a good man. I honour him as such; and love him as my sister's husband.

Lady L. bowed, and looked round her, as if she took pride in her brother's approbation of her lord.

Mr. Everard Grandison, proceeded he, is a sprightly man. He is prepared to admire you, Miss Byron. *You* will not believe, perhaps, half the handsome things he will say to you; but yet, will be the only person who hears them, that will not.

Lord G. is a modest young man: he is genteel, well-bred; but is so much in love with a certain young lady, that he does not appear with that dignity in her eye [Why blushes my Charlotte?] that otherwise perhaps he might.

Are not *you*, Sir Charles, a *modest* man?

No comparisons, Charlotte. Where there is a double prepossession; no comparisons!—But Lord G. Miss Byron, is a good kind of young man. You'll not dislike him, though my sister is pleased to think—

No comparisons, Sir Charles.

That's fair, Charlotte. I will leave Lord G. to the judgment of Miss Byron. Ladies can better ac-

count for the approbation and dislikes of ladies, than we men can.

Dr. Bartlett you will also see. He is learned, prudent, humble. You'll read his heart in his countenance, the moment he smiles upon you. Your grandfather, madam, had fine curling silver hair, had he not? The moment I heard that you owed obligation to your grandfather's care and delight in you, I figured to myself, that he was just such a man, habit excepted: your grandfather was not a clergyman, I think. When I have friends whom I have a strong desire to please, I always endeavour to treat them with Dr. Bartlett's company. He has but one fault; he speaks too little: but were he to speak much, every one else would *wish* to be silent.

My ward Emily Jervois is an amiable girl. Her father was a good man; but not happy in his nuptials. He bequeathed to my care, on his death-bed, at Florence, this his only child. My sister loves her. I love her for her own sake, as well as for her father's. She has a great fortune: and I have had the happiness to recover large sums, which her father gave over for lost. He was an Italian merchant; and driven out of England by the unhappy temper of his wife. I have had some trouble with her; and, if she be living, expect more.

Unhappy temper of his wife, Sir Charles! You are very mild in your account of one of the most abandoned of women.

Well, but, Charlotte, I am only giving brief hints of Emily's story, to procure for her an interest in Miss Byron's favour, and to make their first acquaintance easy to each other. Emily wants no prepossession in Miss Byron's favour. She will be very ready herself to tell her whole story to Miss Byron. Meantime, let us not say all that is just to

say of the *mother,* when we are speaking of the *daughter.*

I stand corrected, Sir Charles.

Emily, madam (turning to me) is not constantly resident with us in town. She is fond of being every-where with my Charlotte.

And where *you* are, Sir Charles, said Miss Grandison.

Mr. Reeves whispered a question to Sir Charles, which was seconded by my eyes; for I guessed what it was: whether he had heard any-thing further of Sir Hargrave?

Don't be anxious said Sir Charles. All must be well. People, long used to error, don't, without reluctance, submit to new methods of proceeding. All must be well.

Sir Charles, stepping out, brought in with him Miss Jervois. The gentlemen seem engaged in conversation, said he. But I know the impatience of this young lady to pay her respects to Miss Byron.

He presented her to us: This dear girl is my Emily. Allow me, madam, whenever Miss Grandison shall be absent, to claim for her the benefit of your instruction, and your general countenance, as she shall appear worthy of it.

There are not many men, my Lucy, who can make a compliment to one lady, without robbing, or, at least, depreciating another. How often have you and I observed, that a polite brother is a black swan?

I saluted the young lady, and told her, I should be fond of embracing every opportunity that should offer, to commend myself to her favour.

Miss Emily Jervois is a lovely girl. She is tall, genteel, and has a fine complexion; and, though pitted with the small-pox, is pretty. The sweetness of her manners, as expressed in her aspect, gives

her great advantage. I was sure, the moment I saw her, that her greatest delight is to please.

She made me two or three pretty compliments; and, had *not* Sir Charles commended her to me, I should have been highly taken with her.

Mr. Grandison entered; and, as if I were not to hear, said: Upon my honour, Sir Charles, I can stay no longer: to know that the finest woman in England is under the same roof with me; yet to be so long detained from paying my respects to her—I can't bear it. And in a very gallant manner, as he seemed to *intend*, he paid his compliments, first to me, and then to my two cousins:—and whispering, yet loud enough to be heard, to Miss Grandison, swore by his soul, that report fell short of my perfections—and I can't tell what.

Did I not tell you, that you would say so, Sir? said Miss Grandison.

I did not like the gentleman the better for what I had heard of him: but, perhaps, should have been less indifferent to his compliment, had I not before been acquainted with Mr. Greville, Mr. Fenwick, and Sir Hargrave Pollexfen. The men of this cast, I think, seem all alike. Poor creatures! how from my heart—But, indeed, now that I have the honour to know these two sisters, I despise *myself*.

Sir Charles, addressing himself to my cousins and me, Now, said he, that my cousin Grandison has found an opportunity to introduce himself; and that I have presented my ward to you; we will, if you please, see how Lord L. Lord G. and Dr. Bartlett, are engaged.

He led my cousin Reeves into the dining-room.

Lord L. addressed us with great politeness.

After Sir Charles had presented the doctor to my cousins, he respectfully took my hand: Were there fifty ladies here, my good Dr. Bartlett, whom you

had never seen before, you would, I am sure, from the character you have had of Miss Byron, be under no difficulty of reading that character in this young lady's face.—Miss Byron, behold, in Dr. Bartlett, another grandfather!

I reverence, said I, good Dr. Bartlett. I borrow Sir Charles's thought: the character he has given you, Sir, is stamped in your countenance. I should have venerated you wherever I had seen you.

The gentleman has such a truly venerable aspect, my Lucy, I could not help saying this.

Sir Charles's goodness, madam, said he, as it ever did, prevents my wishes. I rejoice to see, and to congratulate, a new sister, *restored*, as I will call it in the language of Miss Grandison, to the best of families.

Just then came in a servant, and whispered to Sir Charles: Shew the gentleman, said Sir Charles, into the drawing-room, next the study.

Mr. Grandison came up to me, and said many silly things. I thought them so at that time.

Mr. Reeves soon after was sent for out by Sir Charles. I did not like his looks on his return.

Dinner being ready to be served, and Sir Cha'es, who was still with the gentleman, summoned to it, he desired we would walk down, and he would wait upon us by the time we were seated.

Some new trouble, thought I, of which I am the cause, I doubt.

Presently came in Sir Charles, unaffectedly smiling and serene.—God bless you, Sir! thought I—His looks pleased me better than my cousin's.

But, my dear, there is something going forward that I cannot get out of my cousin. I hoped I should, when I got home. The gentleman to whom Sir Charles was called out, was certainly that Bagenhall. Mr. Reeves cannot deny that. I guessed it

was, by Sir Charles's sending in for Mr. Reeves. It must be about me.

We had several charming conversations. Sir Charles was extremely entertaining. So unassuming, so lively, so modest! It was also delightful to see the attention paid to him by the servants as they waited at table. They watched every look of his. I never saw love and reverence so agreeably mingled in servants' faces in my life. And his commands were delivered to them with so much gentleness of voice and aspect, that one could not but conclude in favour of both, that they were the best of servants to the best of masters.

Mr. Grandison was very gallant in his speeches to me; but very uncivil with his eyes.

Lord L. said but little; but what he did say, deservedly gained attention.

Every-body reverenced Dr. Bartlett, and was attentive when he spoke; and would, I dare say, on his own account, had not the master of the house, by the regard he paid him, engaged every one's veneration for him. Many of the questions which Sir Charles put to him, as if to inform himself, it was evident he could himself have answered: yet he put them with an air of *teachableness*, if I may so express myself; and received the doctor's answers to them with as much satisfaction, as if he were then newly enlightened by them.—Ah, my Lucy! you imagine, I dare say, that this admirable man lost nothing in my eyes, by this his polite condescension. Reserve, and a politeness that had dignity in it, shewed that the fine gentleman and the clergyman were not separated in Dr. Bartlett.—Pity they should be in any of the function!

Sir Charles gave Lord G. an opportunity to shine, by leading the discourse into circumstances and details, which Lord G. could best recount. My lord

has been a traveller. He is a connoisseur in antiquities, and in those parts of *nice* knowledge, as I, a woman, call it, with which the Royal Society here, and the learned and polite of other nations, entertain themselves.

Lord G. appeared to advantage, as Sir Charles managed it, under the awful eye of Miss Grandison. Upon my word, Lucy, she makes very free with him. I whispered her, that she did—A very Miss Howe, said I. To a *very* Mr. Hickman, rewhispered she.—But here's the difference: I am not determined to have Lord G. Miss Howe yielded to her mother's recommendation, and intended to marry Mr. Hickman, even when she used him worst. One time or other (archly continued she the whisper, holding up her spread hand, and with a countenance of admiration) my Lord G. is to shew us his collection of butterflies, and other gaudy insects: Will you make one?—

Of the gaudy insects? whispered I.—

Fie, Harriet!—One of the party, you know, I must mean. Let me tell you, I never saw a collection of these various insects, that I did not the more admire the Maker of them, and of all us insects, whatever I thought of the collectors of the minute ones.—Another word with you, Harriet—These little playful studies may do well enough with persons who do not want to be *more* than indifferent to us: but do you think a lover ought to take high delight in the painted wings of a butterfly, when a fine lady has made herself all over butterfly to attract him?—Eyes off, Sir Charles!—for he looked, though smilingly, yet earnestly, at us, as we whispered behind Lady L.'s chair; who heard what was said, and was pleased with it.

LETTER II.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Thursday morning, March 2.

I SHOULD have told you, that Miss Grandison did the honours of the table; and I will go round it; for I know you expect I should. But I have not yet done with Lord G. Poor man! he is excessively in love, I see that. Well he may. What man would not with Miss Grandison? Yet is she too superior, I think.

What can a woman do, who is addressed by a man of talents inferior to her own? Must she throw away her talents? Must she hide her light under a bushel, purely to do credit to the man? She cannot pick and choose, as men can. She has only her negative; and, if she is desirous to oblige her friends, not always *that*. Yet it is said, women must not encourage fops and fools. They must encourage men of sense only. And it is *well* said. But what can they do, if their lot be cast only among foplings? If the men of sense do not offer themselves? And pray, may I not ask, if the taste of the age, among the men, is not dress, equipage, and foppery? Is the cultivation of the mind any part of their study? The men, in short, are sunk, my dear; and the women but barely swim.

Lord G. seems a little too finical in his dress. And yet I am told, that Sir Walter Watkyns outdoes him in foppery. What can they mean by it, when Sir Charles Grandison is before them? *He* scruples not to modernize a little; but then you see, that it is in compliance with the fashion, and to avoid singularity; a fault to which great minds are perhaps too often subject, though *he* is so much above it.

I want to know, methinks, whether Sir Charles is *very* much in earnest in his favour to Lord G. with regard to Miss Grandison. I doubt not, if he be, but he has good reasons for it.

Were this vile Sir Hargrave out of my head, I could satisfy myself about twenty and twenty things, that now-and-then I want to know.

Miss Jervois behaved very discreetly. With what pleasure did she hang on every word that fell from the lips of her guardian! I thought more than once of Swift's Cadenus and Vanessa. Poor girl! how I should pity her, were she insensibly to suffer her gratitude to lead her to be in love with her benefactor! Indeed, I pity every-body who is hopelessly in love.

Now don't shake your head, my uncle! Did I not always pity Mr. Orme, and Mr. Fowler?—You know I did, Lucy.

Miss Jervois had a smile ready for every one; but it was not an implicit, a childish smile. It had distinction in it; and shewed intelligence. Upon the whole, she said little, and heard all that was said with attention: and hence I pronounce her a very discreet young lady.

But I thought to have done with the *men* first; and here is Mr. Grandison hardly mentioned; who, yet, in his own opinion, was not the last of the men at table.

Mr. Grandison is a man of middling stature; not handsome in my eyes; but so near being handsome, that he may be excused, when one knows him, for thinking, himself so; because he is liable to make greater mistakes than that.

He dresses very gaily too. He is at the *head* of the fashion, as it seems, he thinks; but, however, is one of the *first* in it, be it what it will. He is a great frequenter of the drawing-room; of all manner of

public spectacles; a leader of the taste at a new play, or opera. He dances, he sings, he laughs; and values himself on all three qualifications: and yet certainly has sense; but is not likely to improve it much; since he seems to be so much afraid of suffering in the consequence he thinks himself of, that whenever Sir Charles applies himself to him, upon any of his levities, though but by the eye, his consciousness, however mild the look, makes him shew an uneasiness at the instant: he reddens, sits in pain; calls for favour by his eyes and his quivering lips; and has, notwithstanding, a smile ready to turn into a laugh, in order to lessen his own sensibility, should he be likely to suffer in the opinion of the company: but every motion shews his consciousness of inferiority to the man, of whose smile or animadversions he is so very apprehensive.

What a captious, what a supercilious husband, to a woman who should happen to have a stronger mind than his, would Mr. Grandison make! But he values himself upon his having preserved his liberty.

I believe there are more bachelors now in England, by many thousands, than were a few years ago: and, probably, the numbers of them (and of single women, of course) will every year increase. The luxury of the age will account a good deal for this; and the turn our sex take in *un*-domesticating themselves, for a good deal more. But let not those worthy young women, who may think themselves destined to a single life, repine over-much at their lot; since, possibly, if they have had no lovers, or having had one, two, or three, have not found a husband, they have had rather a miss than a loss, as men go. And let me here add, that I think, as matters stand in this age, or indeed ever did stand, that those women who have joined with the men in their insolent

ridicule of old maids, ought never to be forgiven: no, though Miss Grandison should be one of the ridiculers. An old maid *may be* an odious character, if they will tell us, that the bad qualities of the persons, not the maiden state, are what they mean to expose: but then they must allow, that there are old maids of twenty; and even that there are widows and wives of all ages and complexions, who, in the abusive sense of the words, are as much old maids, as the most particular of that class of females.

But a word or two more concerning Mr. Grandison.

He is about thirty-two. He has had the *glory* of ruining two or three women. Sir Charles has *restored* him to a sense of shame [all men, I hope, are born with it]; which, a few months ago, he had got above. And he does not now entertain ladies with instances of the frailty of individuals of their sex; which many are too apt, encouragingly, to smile at; when I am very much mistaken, if every woman would not find her account, if she wishes *herself* to be thought well of, in discouraging every reflection that may have a tendency to debase or expose the sex in general. How can a man be suffered to boast of his vileness to one woman, in the presence of another, without a rebuke, that should put it to the proof, whether the boaster was, or was not, past blushing?

Mr. Grandison is thought to have hurt his fortune, which was very considerable, by his free living, and an itch of gaming; to cure him of which, Sir Charles encourages him to give him his company at all opportunities. He certainly has understanding enough to know how to value the favour; for he owns to Miss Grandison, that he both loves and

fears him; and now-and-then tells her, that he would give the world, if he had it, to be able to be just what Sir Charles is! Good God! at other times he has broke out, what an odious creature is a rake! How I hate myself, when I contemplate the excellencies of this divine brother of yours!

I shall say nothing of Sir Charles in this place. You, I know, my Lucy, will admire me for my forbearance.

Lady L. and Miss Grandison were the graces of the table. So lively, so sensible, so frank, so polite, so good-humoured, what honour do they and their brother reflect back on the memory of their mother! Lady Grandison, it seems, was an excellent woman. Sir Thomas was not, I have heard, quite unexceptionable. How useful, if so, are the women in the greater, as well as in the lesser, parts of domestic duty, where they *perform* their duty! And what have those, who do not, to answer for, to GOD, to their children, and even to their whole sex, for the contempts they bring upon it by their uselessness, and perhaps extravagance; since, if the human mind is not actively good, it will generally be actively evil.

Dr. Bartlett I have already spoken of. How did he enliven the conversation, whenever he bore a part in it! So happy an elocution, so clear, so just, so solid, his reasoning! I wish I could remember every word he said.

Sir Charles observed to us, before we *saw* him, that he was not forward to speak: but, as I hinted, he threw the occasions in his way, on purpose to draw him out: and at such times, what he said was easy, free, and unaffected: and whenever a subject was concluded, he had done with it. His modesty, in short, made him always follow rather than lead a subject, as he very well might do, be it what it would.

I was charmed with the Brachman's prayer; which he, occasionally, gave us on the antient Persians being talked of.

Looking up to the rising sun, which it was supposed they worshipped, these were the words of the Brachman:

> "O THOU (meaning the ALMIGHTY) by whom *thou* (meaning the sun) art enlightened, illuminate my mind, that my actions may be agreeable to THY will!"

And this I will think of, my Lucy, as often as my early hour, for the future, shall be irradiated by that glorious orb.

Every-body was pleased with Mr. and Mrs. Reeves. Their modesty, good sense, and amiable tempers, and the kind, yet not ostentatious regard which they express to each other (a regard so creditable to the married state) cause them to be always treated and spoken of with distinction.

But I believe, as I am in a scribbling vein, I must give you the particulars of one conversation; in which farther honour was done to Dr. Bartlett.

After dinner, the countess drawing me on one side, by both my hands, said; Well, our other sister, our new-found sister, let me bespeak your favour. I am in pain lest you should not love us as well as you do *our* Northamptonshire relations, bold as that hope is.

You overcome me, madam, with your goodness.

Miss Grandison then coming towards us, Dear Miss Grandison, said I, help me to words—

No, indeed, I'll help you to nothing. I am jealous. Lady L. don't think to rob me of my Harriet's preferable love, as you have of Sir Charles's. I *will* be best sister here. But what was your subject?—

Yet I will answer my own question. Some pretty compliment, I suppose; women to women. Women hunger and thirst after compliments. Rather than be without them, if no men are at hand to flatter us, we love to say handsome things to one another; and so teach the men to find us out.

You need not be *jealous*, Charlotte, said the countess: you may be *sure*. This saucy girl, Miss Byron, is ever frustrating her own pretensions. Can flattery, Charlotte, say what we will, have place *here?*—But tell me, Miss Byron, how you like Dr. Bartlett?

Ay, tell us, Harriet, said Miss Grandison, how you like Dr. Bartlett? Pray, Lady L. don't anticipate me: I propose to give our new sister the history of us all: and is not Dr. Bartlett one of *us?* She has already given me the history of all her friends, and of herself: and I have communicated to you, like a good sister, all she has told me.

I considered Dr. Bartlett, I said, as a saint; and, at the same time, as a man of true politeness.

He is indeed, said the countess, all that is worthy and amiable in man. Don't you see how Sir Charles admires him?

Pray, Lady L. keep clear of my province. Here is Sir Charles. He will not let us break into parties.

Sir Charles heard this last sentence—Yet I wonder not, said he, joining us, that three such women get together: goodness to goodness is a natural attraction. We men, however, will not be excluded. —Dr. Bartlett, if you please—

The doctor approached in a most graceful manner—Let me again, Miss Byron, present Dr. Bartlett to you, as a man that is an honour to his cloth; and that is the same thing, as if I said, to human nature [the good man bowed in silenced]; and Miss

Byron to you, my good doctor (taking my hand) as a lady most worthy your distinguished regard.

You do me too much honour, Sir, said I. I shall hope, good Dr. Bartlett, by your instructions, to be enabled to deserve such a recommendation.

My dear Harriet, said the countess, snatching my other hand, you are a *good* girl; and that is more to your honour than beauty.

Be quiet, Lady L. said Miss Grandison.

Mr. Grandison came up—What? Is there not another hand for me?

I was vexed at his interruption. It prevented Dr. Bartlett from saying something that his lips were opening to speak with a smile of benignity.

How the world, said Sir Charles, smiling, will push itself in! *Heart*, not *hand*, my dear Mr. Grandison, was the subject.

Whenever you, Sir Charles, and the doctor, and these ladies, are got together, I know I *must* be unseasonable: but if you exclude me such company, how shall I ever be what you and the doctor would have me to be?

Lord L. and Lord G. were coming up to us: See your attraction, Miss Byron, said Lady L.

But, joined in Miss Grandison, we will not leave our little Jervois by herself, expecting and longing!—Our cousins Reeves—only that when they are together, they cannot want company—should not be thus left. Is there more than one heart among us?—This man's' excepted, humorously pushing Mr. Grandison, as if from the company—Let us be orderly, and take our seats.

How cruel is this! said Mr. Grandison, appealing to Sir Charles.

Indeed I think it is a little cruel, Charlotte.

Not so: let him be good then.—Till when, may all our sex say, to such men as my cousin has been

—"Thus let it be done by the man, whom, if he were good, good persons would delight to honour."

Shame, if not principle, said Lord L. smiling, would effect the cure, if all ladies were to act thus. Don't you think so, cousin Everard?

Well, well, said Mr. Grandison, I will be good, as fast as I can: but, doctor, what say you?—Rome was not built in a day.

I have great hopes of Mr. Grandison, said the doctor. But, ladies, you must not, as Mr. Grandison observed, exclude from the benefit of *your* conversation, the man whom you wish to be good.

What! not till he *is* good? said Miss Grandison. Did I not say, we should delight to honour him when he was?

But, what, Sir Charles? (come, I had rather take my cue from you, than any-body; what) are the signs which I am to give to be allowed——

Only these, my cousin—When you can be serious on serious subjects; yet so cheerful in your seriousness, as if it sat easy upon you; when you can, at times, prefer the company and conversation of Dr. Bartlett, who is not a solemn or severe man, to any other; and, in general, had rather stand well in his opinion, than in that of the gayest man or woman in the world.

Provided yours, Sir Charles, may be added to the doctor's—

Command me, Mr. Grandison, whenever you two are together. We will not oppress you with our subjects. Our conversation shall be that of men, of *cheerful* men. You shall lead them and change them at pleasure. The first moment (and I will watch for it) that I shall imagine you to be tired or uneasy, I will break off the conversation; and you shall leave us, and pursue your own diversions without a question.

You were always indulgent to me, Sir Charles,

said Mr. Grandison; and I have retired, and blushed to myself, sometimes, for *wanting* your indulgence.

Tea was preparing. Sir Charles took his own seat next Lord L. whom he set in to talk of Scotland. He enjoyed the account my lord gave of the pleasure which the countess, on that her first journey into those parts, gave to all *his* family and friends; as Lady L. on her part acknowledged she had a grateful sense of *their* goodness to her.

I rejoice, said Sir Charles, that the sea divides us not from such worthy people, as you, my lord, have given us a relation to. Next visit you make (Charlotte, I hope, will accompany me) I intend to make one in your train, as I have told your lordship before.

You will add to our pleasure, Sir Charles. All my relations are prepared to do you honour.

But, my lord, did not the ladies think a little hardly of your lordship's engagement? that a man of your merit should go from Scotland for a wife? I do assure you, my lord, that in all the countries I have been in, I never saw finer women than I have seen in Scotland; and, in very few nations, though six times as large, greater numbers of them.

I *was* to be the happiest of men, Sir Charles, in a Grandison—I thank *you*, bowing.

It is one of my felicities, my lord, that my sister calls herself yours.

Lady L. whispering me, as I sat between her and Miss Grandison, The two worthiest hearts in the world, Miss Byron! my lord L.'s, and my brother's!

With joy I congratulate your ladyship on both, re-whispered I. May God long continue to you two such blessings!

I thought of the vile Sir Hargrave at the time.

I can tell you how, said Mr. Grandison, to repay

that nation—You, Sir Charles, shall go down, and bring up with you a Scottish lady.

I was vexed with myself for starting. I could not help it.

Don't you think, Lucy, that Sir Charles made a very fine compliment to the Scottish ladies?—I own, that I have heard the women of our northern counties praised *also*. But are there not, think you, as pretty women in England?

My sister Harriet, applied Sir Charles to me, you need not, I hope, be told that I am a great admirer of fine women.

I had like to have bowed—I should not have been able to recover myself, had I so seemed to apply his compliment.

I the less wonder that you are, Sir Charles, because in the word *fine*, you include mind as well as person.

That's my good girl! said Miss Grandison, as she poured out the tea: and so he does.

My dear Charlotte, whispered I—Pray, say something encouraging to Lord G. He is pleased with every-body; but nobody says any-thing to him; and he, I see, both loves and fears you.

Hush, child! whispered she again. The man's best when he is silent. If it be his day to *love*, it is his day to *fear*. What a deuce! shall a woman's time be never?

That's good news for my lord: shall I hint to him, that his time *will* come?

Do, if you dare. I want you to provoke me. She spoke aloud.

I have done, said I.

My lord, what do you think Miss Byron says?

For Heaven's sake, dear Miss Grandison!

Nay, I *will* speak it.

Pray, madam, let me know, said my lord.

You will know Miss Grandison in time, said Sir Charles. I trust her not with any of *my* secrets, Miss Byron.

The more ungenerous you, Sir Charles; for you get out of me all mine. I complained of you, Sir, to Miss Byron, for your reserves at Colnebrook.

Be so good, madam, said my lord—

Nay, nothing but the mountain and the mouse. Miss Byron only wanted to see your collection of insects.

Miss Byron will do me great honour—

If Charlotte won't attend you, madam, said the countess, to my Lord G.'s, I will.

Have I not brought you off, Harriet? whispered Miss Grandison—Trust me another time.—She will let you know the day before, my lord.

Miss Grandison, my lord, said I, loves to alarm. But I will with pleasure wait on *her*, and Lady L. whenever they please.

You will see many things worth your notice, madam, in Lord G.'s collection, said Sir Charles to me. But Charlotte thinks nothing less than men and women worthy of hers; her parrot and squirrel, the one for its prattle, the other for its vivacity, excepted.

Thank you, Sir Charles—But pray do *you* be quiet! I fear nobody else.

Miss Byron, said Lady L. pray spare her not: I see you can make Charlotte be afraid of *two*.

Then it must be of *three*, Lady L.—You know my reverence for my elder sister.

Indeed but I don't. I know only, that nobody can better tell, what she *should* do, than my Charlotte: but I have always taken too much delight in your vivacity, either to wish or expect you to rein it in.

You acted by me like an *indolent* parent, Lady L.

who miscals herself *indulgent*. You gave me my head for your own pleasure; and when I had got it, though you found the inconvenience, you chose rather to bear it, than to take the pains to restrain me—But Sir Charles, whatever faults he might have had when he was from us, came over to us finished. He grew not up with us from year to year: his blaze dazzled me; and I have tried over and over, but cannot yet get the better of my reverence for him.

If I have not my sister's love, rather than what she pleasantly calls her reverence, I shall have a much worse opinion of my own outward behaviour, than of her merit.

Your outward behaviour, Sir Charles, cannot be in fault, said Lord L.: but I join with my sister Charlotte, in her opinion of what *is*.

And I too, said Lady L.—for I am a party—This is it, Sir Charles—Who that lies under obligations which they cannot return, can view the obliger but with the most delicate sensibility?

Give *me* leave, said Miss Emily, her face crimsoned over with modest gratitude, to say, that I am one, that shall ever have a reverence, superior to my love, for the best of guardians.

Blushes overspread my face, and gave a tacit acknowledgment, on my part, of the same sensibility, from the same motives.

Who is it, joined in Dr. Bartlett, that knows my patron, but must acknowledge—

My dear Dr. Bartlett, interrupted Sir Charles, from you, and from my good Lord L. these fine things are not to be borne. From my three sisters, looking at *me* for one, and from my dear ward, I cannot be so uneasy, when they will not be restrained from acknowledging, that I have succeeded in my endeavours to perform my *duty* to them.

I long to know, as I said once before, the particulars of what Sir Charles has done, to oblige every-body in so high a manner. Don't *you*, Lucy? Bless me! what a deal of time have I wasted since I came to town! I feel as if I had wings, and had soared to so great a height, that every thing and person that I before beheld without dissatisfaction, in this great town, looks diminutive and little, under my aking eye. Thus, my dear, it must be in a better world, if we are permitted to look back upon the *highest* of our satisfactions in this.

I was asked to give them a lesson on the harpsichord after tea. Miss Grandison said, Come, come, to prevent all excuses, I will shew you the way.

Let it then be, said Mr. Grandison, Shakespeare's Cuckow. You have made me enter with so much comparative shame into myself, that I must have something lively to raise my spirits.

Well, so it shall, replied Miss Grandison. Our poor cousin does not know what to do with himself when you are got a little out of his reach.

That is not fair, Charlotte, said Sir Charles. It is not that graceful manner of obliging, in which you generally excel. Compliance and reflection are not to be coupled.

Well, well, but I will give the good man his Cuckow, to make him amends.

Accordingly she sung that ballad from Shakespeare; and with so much spirit and humour, as delighted every-body.

Sir Charles being a judge of music, I looked a little sillier than usual, when I was again called upon.

Come, my dear, said the kind countess, I will prepare you a little further. When you see your two elder sisters go before you, you will have more courage.

She sat down, and played one of Scarlatti's lessons; which, you know, are made to shew a fine hand. And surely, for the swiftness of her fingers, and the elegance of her manner, she could not be equalled.

It is referred to you, my third sister, said Sir Charles [who had been taken aside by Mr. Reeves; some whispering talk having passed between them] to favour us with some of Handel's music: Mrs. Reeves says, she has heard you sing several songs out of the Pastoral, and out of some of his finest oratorios.

Come hither, come hither, my sweet Harriet—Here's his Alexander's Feast: my brother admires *that*, I know; and says it is the noblest composition that ever was produced by man; and is as finely set as written.

She made me sit down to the instrument.

As you know, said I, that great part of the beauty of this performance arises from the proper transitions from one different strain to another, any one song must lose greatly, by being taken out of its place: and I fear—

Fear nothing, Miss Byron, said Sir Charles: your obligingness, as well as your observation, intitle you to all allowances.

I then turned to that fine air,

> Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
> Soon he sooth'd his soul to pleasures.

Which not being set so full with accompanying symphonies, as most of Mr. Handel's are, I performed with the more ease to myself, though I had never but once before played it over.

They all, with more compliments than I dare repeat, requested me to play and sing it once more.

Dare repeat! methinks I hear my uncle Selby say, The girl that does nothing else but repeat her own praises, comes with her *if I dare repeat.*

Yes, Sir, I answer; for compliments that do not elevate, that do not touch me, run glibly off my pen: but such as *indeed* raise one's vanity; how can one *avow* that vanity by writing them down?—But they were resolved to be pleased before I began.

One compliment, however, from Sir Charles, I cannot, I find, pass over in silence. He whispered Miss Grandison, as he leaned upon my chair, How could Sir Hargrave Pollexfen have the heart to endeavour to stop such a mouth as that!

And now, having last night, and this morning, written so many sides, it is time to break off. Yet I could give you many more particulars of agreeable conversation that passed, were I sure you would not think me insufferably tedious; and did not the unkind reserve of my cousin Reeves, as to the business of that Bagenhall, rush upon my memory with fresh force, and help to tire my fingers. I am the more concerned, as my cousin himself seems not easy; but is in expectation of hearing something, that will either give him relief, or add to his pain.

Why, Lucy, should our friends take upon themselves to keep us in the dark, as to those matters which it concerns us more to know, than perhaps any-body else? There is a tenderness sometimes shewn on arduous occasions in this respect, that gives as much pain, as we could receive from the most explicit communication. And then, all the while, there is so much strength of mind, and discretion, supposed in the person that knows an event, and such weakness in her that is to be kept in igno-

rance, that—But I grow as saucy as impatient. Let me conclude, before I expose myself to reproof for a petulance, that I hope is not natural to your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER III.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS LUCY SELBY.

Thursday night, March 2.

AND what do you think was the reason of Mr. Reeves's reserves? A most alarming one. I am obliged to him, that he kept it from me, though the uncertainty did not a little affect me. Take the account of it, as it comes out.

I told you in my former, that the person to whom Sir Charles was sent for out, was Mr. Bagenhall; and that Sir Charles had sent in for Mr. Reeves, who returned to the company with a countenance that I did not like so well as I did Sir Charles's. I now proceed to give you, from minutes of Mr. Reeves, what passed on the occasion.

Sir Charles took Mr. Reeves aside—This unhappy man (Sir Hargrave, I mean, said he) seems to me to want an excuse to himself, for putting up with a treatment which he thinks disgraceful. When we have to deal with children, humours must be a little allowed for. But you will hear what the proposal is now. Let not the ladies, however, nor the gentlemen, within, know any-thing of the matter till all is over. This is a day devoted to pleasure. But *you*, Mr. Reeves, know something of the matter; and can answer for your fair cousin.

He then led Mr. Reeves in to Mr. Bagenhall.

This, Sir, is Mr. Reeves.—Sir Hargrave, in short, Mr. Reeves, among other demands that I cannot comply with (but which relate only to myself, and therefore need not be mentioned) insists upon an introduction to Miss Byron. He says, she is absolutely disengaged—Is she, Sir?

I dare say she is, answered my cousin.

This gentlemen has been naming to me Mr. Greville, Mr. Orme, and others.

No one of them has ever met with the shadow of encouragement from my cousin. She is above keeping any man in suspense, when she is not in any herself. Nothing has given her more uneasiness than the number of her admirers.

Miss Byron, said Sir Charles, *must* be admired by every one that beholds her; but still more by those who are admitted to the honour of conversing with her. But Sir Hargrave is willing to build upon her disengagement something in his own favour. Is there any room for Sir Hargrave, who pleads his sufferings for her; who vows his honourable intentions even at the time that he was hoping to gain her by so unmanly a violence; and appeals to her for the purity, as he calls it, of his behaviour to her all the time she was in his hands—who makes very large offers of settlements—Is there any room to hope, that Miss Byron—

No, none at all, Sir Charles—

What! not to save a life, Mr. Reeves?—said Mr. Bagenhall.

If you mean mine, Mr. Bagenhall, replied Sir Charles, I beg *that* may not be considered. If Sir Hargrave means his own, I will pronounce that it is safe from any premeditated resentment of mine. Do you think Miss Byron will bear to see Sir Hargrave, Mr. Reeves? I presume he intends to beg pardon of her. Will she consent to receive a visit from

him?—But is not this wretched trifling, Mr. Bagenhall?

You will remember, Sir Charles, this is a proposal of *mine*: what I *hoped* might be agreed to by Sir Hargrave; but that I was willing to consult you before I mentioned it to him.

I beg your pardon, Mr. Bagenhall: I now remember it.

If ever man doted upon a woman, said Mr. Bagenhall, Sir Hargrave dotes on Miss Byron. The very methods he took to obtain her for a wife, shew *that* most convincingly.—You will promise not to stand in his way, Sir?

I repeat, Mr. Bagenhall, what I have heretofore told you; That Miss Byron (*you'll* excuse me, Mr. Reeves) is still under *my* protection. If Sir Hargrave, as he ought, is inclined to ask her pardon; and if he can obtain it, and even upon his own terms; I shall think Miss Byron and he may be happier together, than at present I can imagine it possible. I am not desirous to be any-way considered, but as her protector from violence and insult; and that I *will* be, if she claim it, in defiance of a hundred such men as Sir Hargrave. But then, Sir, the occasion must be sudden: no legal relief must be at hand. I will not, either for an adversary's sake, or my own, be defied into a cool and premeditated vengeance.

But, Sir Charles, Sir Hargrave has some hardships in this case. You will not give him the satisfaction of a gentleman: and, according to the laws of honour, a man is not intitled to be *treated* as a gentleman, who denies to one—

Of whose making, Mr. Bagenhall, are the laws of honour you mention? I own no laws, but the laws of God and my country. But, to cut this matter short, tell Sir Hargrave, that, little as is the

dependence a man of honour can have upon that of a man, who has acted by a helpless woman, as he has acted by Miss Byron, I will breakfast with him in his own house to-morrow morning, if he contradicts it not. I will attribute to the violence of his passion for the lady, the unmanly outrage he was guilty of. I will suppose him mistaken enough to imagine, that he should make her amends by marriage, if he could compel her hand; and will trust my person to his honour, one servant only to walk before his door, not to enter the house, to attend my commands, after our conversation is over. My sword, and my sword only, shall be my companion: but this rather, that I would not be thought to owe my safety to the want of it, than in expectation, after such confidence placed in him, to have occasion to draw it in my own defence. And pray, Mr. Bagenhall, do you, his friend, be present; and any other friends, and to what number, he pleases.

When I came to this place in my cousin's minutes, I was astonished; I was out of breath upon it.

Mr. Bagenhall was surprised; and asked Sir Charles, if he were in earnest?

I would not be thought a rash man, Mr. Bagenhall. Sir Hargrave *threatens* me: I never avoid a threatener. *You* seem to hint, Sir, that I am not intitled to fair play, if I consent not to meet him with a murderous intention. With *such* an intention I never will meet any man; though I have as much reason to rely on the skill of my arm, as on the justice of my cause. If foul play is hinted at, I am no more safe from an assassin in my bedchamber, than in Sir Hargrave's house. Something must be done by a man who refuses a challenge, to let a challenger see (such is the world, such is the custom) that he has *better* motives than fear, for his refusal. I

will put Sir Hargrave's honour to the fullest test: tell him, Sir, that I will bear a great deal; but that I will not be insulted, were he a prince.

And you really would have me—

I would, Mr. Bagenhall. Sir Hargrave, I see, will not be satisfied, unless something extraordinary be done: and if I hear not from you, or from him, I will attend him by ten to-morrow morning, in an amicable manner, to breakfast at his own house in Cavendish Square.

I am in terror, Lucy, even in transcribing only.

Mr. Reeves, said Sir Charles, you undo me, if one word of this matter escape you, even to your wife.

Mr. Reeves begged, that he might attend him to Sir Hargrave's.

By no means, Mr. Reeves.

Then, Sir Charles, you apprehend danger.

I do *not*. Something, as I said, must be done. This is the shortest and best method to make all parties easy. Sir Hargrave thinks himself slighted. He may infer, if he pleases, in his own favour, that I do *not* despise a man, in whom I can place such a confidence. Do you, Mr. Reeves, return to company; and let no one know the occasion of your absence, or of mine, from it.

I have told you, my dear, what a difference there was in the countenances of both, when each separately entered the dining-room. And could this great man (surely I may call him *great*) could he, in *such* circumstances, on his return, give joy, pleasure, entertainment, to all the company, without the least cause of suspicion of what had passed?

Mr. Reeves, as I told you, singled out Sir Charles in the evening to know what had passed after he left him and Mr. Bagenhall. Sir Charles acquainted him, that Mr. Bagenhall had proposed to let him know that night, or in the morning, how

Sir Hargrave approved of his intended visit. He has, accordingly, signified to me already, said Sir Charles, that Sir Hargrave expects me.

And will you go, Sir?

Don't give yourself concern about the matter, Mr. Reeves. All must end well. My intention is, not to run into mischief, but to prevent it. My principles are better known abroad, than they are in England. I have been challenged more than once by men, who knew them, and thought to find their safety from them. I have been obliged to take some extraordinary steps to save myself from insult; and those steps have answered my end, in more licentious countries than this. I hope this step will preserve me from calls of this nature in my own country.

For God's sake, Sir Charles—

Be not uneasy on my account, Mr. Reeves. Does not Sir Hargrave value himself upon his fortune? He would be loth to forfeit it. *His* fortune is *my* security. And am I not a man of some consequence myself? Is not the affair between us known? Will not therefore the cause justify me, and condemn him? The man is turbulent; he is uneasy with himself; he knows himself to be in the wrong. And shall a man, who resolves to pay a sacred regard to laws divine and human, fear this Goth? 'Tis time enough to fear, when I can be unjust. If you value my friendship, as I do yours, my good Mr. Reeves, proceeded he, I shall be sure of your absolute silence. I will attend Sir Hargrave by ten to-morrow morning. You will hear from me, or see me at your own house, by twelve.

And then it was, as Mr. Reeves tells me, that Sir Charles turned from him, to encourage me to give the company a lesson from Dryden's Alexander's Feast.

Mr. Reeves went out in the morning. My cousin says, he had been excessively uneasy all night. He now owns, he called in St. James's Square, and there breakfasted with Lord and Lady L. Miss Grandison, Miss Emily, and Dr. Bartlett. Sir Charles went out at nine in a chair; one servant only attending him: the family knew not whither. And his two sisters were fomenting a rebellion against him, as they humorously called it, for his keeping from them (who kept nothing from *him*) his motions, when they and my lord were together, and at his house: but my lord and Miss Emily pleasantly refused to join in it. Mr. Reeves told us, on his return, that his heart was so sunk, that they took great notice of his dejection.

About three o'clock, just as Mr. Reeves was determined to go to St. James's Square again, and, if Sir Charles had not been heard of, to Cavendish Square (though irresolute what to do when there) the following billet was brought him from Sir Charles. After what I have written, does not your heart leap for joy, my Lucy?

DEAR SIR, Half an hour after two.

I will do myself the honour of visiting Mrs. Reeves, Miss Byron, and you, at your usual tea-time, if you are not engaged. I tell the ladies here, that those who have least to do, are generally the most busy people in the world. I can therefore be only answerable, on this visit, for, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

CHARLES GRANDISON.

Then it was, that, vehemently urged both by my cousin and me, Mr. Reeves gave us briefly the cause of his uneasiness.

About six o'clock, Sir Charles came in a chair.

He was charmingly dressed. I thought him, the moment he entered, the handsomest man I ever saw in my life. What a transporting thing must it be, my Lucy, to an affectionate wife, without restraint, without check, and performing nothing but her duty, to run with open arms to receive a worthy husband, returning to her after a long absence, or from an escaped danger! How cold, how joyless!—But no! I was neither cold, nor joyless; for my face, as I felt it, was in a glow; and my heart was ready to burst with congratulatory meaning, at the visible safety, and unhurt person, of the man who had laid me before under such obligations to him, as were too much for my gratitude. O do not, do not tell me, my dear friends, that *you* love him, that *you* wish me to be his. I shall be ready, if you *do*, to wish—I don't know what I would say: but *your* wishes were always the leaders of *mine*.

Mrs. Reeves, having the same cause for apprehension, could hardly restrain herself when he entered the room. She met him at the door, her hand held out, and with so much emotion, that Sir Charles said, How well, Mr. Reeves, you have kept my secret!—Mr. Reeves told him, what an uneasiness he had laboured under from the preceding evening; and how silent he had been, till his welcome billet came.

Then it was that both my cousins, with equal freedom, congratulated him.

And I'll tell you how the fool, the maiden fool, looked, and acted. Her feet insensibly moved to meet him, while he was receiving the freer compliments of my cousins. I courtesied bashfully: it was hardly noticeable; and, *because* unnoticed, I paid my compliments in a deeper courtesy. And then, finding my hand in his, when I knew not whether I had a hand or not—I am grieved, Sir, said I, to be the occasion, to be the cause—And I sighed

for one reason (perhaps you can guess what that was) and blushed for two; because I knew not what to say, nor how to look; and because I was under obligations which I could not return.

He kindly saved my further confusion, by making light of what had passed: and, leading me to a seat, took his place by me.

May I ask, Sir Charles?—said my cousin Reeves, and stopt.

The conversation was too tedious and too various, to be minutely related, Mr. Reeves. But Sir Hargrave had, by Mr. Bagenhall's desire, got his short-hand writer in a closet; and that unknown to me, till all was over. I am to have a copy of what passed. You shall see it, if you please, when it is sent me. Mean time, what think you of a compromise at *your* expence, Miss Byron?

I dare abide by every-thing that Sir Charles Grandison has stipulated for me.

It would be cruelty to keep a lady in suspense, where doubt will give her pain, and cannot end in pleasure. Sir Hargrave is resolved to wait upon you: are you willing to see him?

If, Sir, you would advise me to see him.

I advise nothing, madam. Pursue your inclinations. Mr. Reeves is at liberty to admit whom he pleases into his house. Miss Byron to see in it, or wheresoever she is, whom she pleases. I told him my mind very freely: but I left him determined to wait on you. I have reason to believe he will behave very well. I should be surprised, if he does not in the humblest manner ask your pardon; and *yours*, Mr. Reeves, and your lady's. But if you have any apprehensions, madam, (to me) I will be ready to attend you at five minutes' notice, before he shall be admitted to your presence.

It is very good, Sir, said Mr. Reeves, to be ready

to favour Miss Byron with your countenance, on such an occasion. But I hope we need not give you that trouble in this house.

Sir Charles went away soon after; and Mr. Reeves has been accusing himself ever since, with answering him too abruptly, though he meant nothing but the truest respect. And yet as I have written it, on re-perusal, I don't above half like Mr. Reeves's answer. But where high respect is entertained, grateful hearts will always, I believe, be accusing themselves of imperfections, which none other see, or can charge them with.

As Sir Charles is safe, and I have now nothing to apprehend but Sir Hargrave's visit, I will dispatch this letter, with assurances that I am, my dear Lucy,

Your ever-affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.



LETTER IV.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS LUCY SELBY.

Friday, one o'clock, March 3.

SIR Charles has just sent the impatiently-expected paper, transcribed by the short-hand writer from the minutes of the conversation that had passed on Sir Charles's intrepid visit at Sir Hargrave's. *Intrepid*, I call it: but had I known of it as Mr. Reeves did, before the event, in some measure, justified the *rashness*, I should have called it rash, and been for proposing to send peace-officers to Cavendish Square, or taking some method to know whether he were safe in his person; especially when three o'clock approached; and his dinner-time is earlier than that of most other people of fashion.

Mr. Reeves has been so good as to undertake to transcribe this long paper for me, that I may have time to give you an account of three particular visits which I have received. I asked Mr. Reeves, if it were not a strange way of proceeding in this Bagenhall to have his short-hand writer, and now turned listener, always with him? He answered, It was not an usual way; but, in cases of this nature, where murder, and a trial, were expected to follow the rashness, in a court of justice, he thought it carried with it, though a face of premeditation, yet a look of fairness; and there was no doubt but the man had been in bad scrapes before now, and was willing to use every precaution for the future.

THE PAPER.

On Thursday morning, March the 2d, 17... I Henry Cotes, according to notice given me the preceding evening, went to the house of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, baronet, in Cavendish Square, about half an hour after eight in the morning, in order to take minutes, in short-hand, of a conversation that was expected to be held between the said Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, and Sir Charles Grandison, baronet, upon a debate between the said gentlemen; on which I had once before attended James Bagenhall, esquire, at the house of the said Sir Charles Grandison in St. James's Square; and from which consequences were apprehended, that might make an exact account of what passed, of great importance.

was admitted, about nine o'clock, into the withdrawing-room; where were present the said Sir Hargrave, the said James Bagenhall, Solomon Merceda, esquire, and John Jordan, esquire: and

they were in full conversation about the reception that was to be given to the said Sir Charles Grandison; which not being a part of my orders or business, I had no command to take down, but the *contrary*.

And that I might, with the less interruption, take minutes of the expected conversation, I was ordered to place myself in a large closet adjoining to the said withdrawing-room, from which it was separated by a thin wainscot-partition: but, lest the said Sir Charles should object to the taking of the said minutes, I was directed to conceal myself there till called forth; but to take the said minutes fairly and truly, as, upon occasion, I would make oath to the truth thereof.

About half an hour after nine o'clock, I heard Mr. Bagenhall, with an oath, that denoted, by the voice, eagerness and surprise, say, Sir Charles was come. And immediately a footman entered, and said, "Sir Charles Grandison!"

Then three or four of the gentlemen spoke together pretty loud and high: but what they said I thought not in my orders to note down. But this is not improper to note: Sir Hargrave said, Give me that pair of pistols, and let him follow me into the garden. By G— he shall take *one*.

No, no! I heard Mr. Merceda say; who being a foreigner, I knew his voice from the rest—No, no! That must not be.

And another voice, I believe by the lisp, it was Mr. Jordan's, say, Let us, Sir Hargrave, hear what a man so gallant has to say for himself. *Occasions* may arise *afterwards*.

Mr. Bagenhall, whose voice I well knew, said, D—n his blood, if a hair of Sir Charles Grandison's head should be hurt on this visit.

Do I, d—n ye all, said Sir Hargrave, offer any-thing unfair, when I would give him the choice of the pistols?

What in your own garden! A pretty story, whichsoever drops! said Mr. Merceda. The devil's in it, if he may not be *forced* now to give you the satisfaction of a gentleman elsewhere.

Desire Sir Charles (d—n his blood, said Sir Hargrave) to come in. And then [as I saw through a knot-hole that I just then, hunting for a crack in the wainscot-partition, discovered] Sir Charles entered; and I saw, that he looked very sedate and cheerful; and he had his sword by his side, though in a morning-dress. And then the conversation began, as follows:

Sir Charles. Your servant, Sir Hargrave. Mr. Bagenhall, yours. Your servant, gentlemen.

Mr. Bagenhall. Yours, Sir Charles. You are a man of your word. This gentleman is Mr. Jordan, Sir Charles. This gentleman is Mr. Merceda.

Sir Ch. Mr. Merceda!—I have heard of Mr. Merceda.—I have been very free, Sir Hargrave, to invite myself to breakfast with you.

Sir Hargrave. Yes, by G—. And so you have before now. Have you any-body with you, Sir?—If you have, let them walk in.

Sir Ch. Nobody, Sir.

Sir Har. These are gentlemen, Sir. They are men of honour. They are *my* friends.

Sir Ch. They look like gentlemen. I suppose every man a man of honour, till I find him otherwise.

Sir Har. But don't think I have them here to intimidate—

Sir Ch. Intimidate, Sir Hargrave! I know not what it is to be intimidated. You say, the gentlemen are your friends. I come with a view to in-

crease, and not diminish, the number of your friends.

Sir Har. "Increase the number of my friends!"—What! with one who robbed me of the only woman on earth that is worth having! And who, but for the unmanly advantage taken of me, had been my wife before the day was over, Sir!—And yet to refuse me the satisfaction of a gentleman, Sir!—But I hope you are now come—

Sir Ch. To breakfast with you, Sir Hargrave—Don't be warm. I am determined, if possible, not to be provoked—But I must not be ill-treated.

Sir Har. Why then, Sir, take one of those two pistols. My chariot shall carry us—

Sir Ch. No-where, Sir Hargrave. What has hitherto passed between us was owing to accident. It is not my way to recriminate. To your own heart, however, I appeal: that must convince you, that the method you took to gain the lady, rendered you unworthy of her. I took no *unmanly* advantage of you. That I refused to meet you in the way you have demanded, gives me a title to call myself your best friend—

Sir Har. "My best friend," Sir!—

Sir Ch. Yes, Sir. If either the preservation of your own life, or the saving you a long regret for taking that of another, as the chance might have been, deserves your consideration. In short, it depends upon yourself, Sir Hargrave, to let me know whether you were guilty of a bad action from mad and violent passion, or from design, and a natural bias, if I may so call it, to violence; which alone can lead you to think of justifying one bad action by another.

Sir Har. Then, Sir, account me a man of *natural violence*, if you please. Who shall value the opinion of a man that has disgracefully—G— d— you, Sir

—Do you see—what marks I shall carry to my grave—

Sir Ch. Were I as violent as you, Sir Hargrave, you might carry those marks to your grave, and not wear them long.—Let us breakfast, Sir. That will give you time to cool. Were I even to do as you would have me, you will best find your account in being cool. You cannot think I would take such an advantage of you, as your passion would give me.

Mr. Bagenhall. Nobly said, by Heaven! Let us breakfast, Sir Hargrave. Then you will be cooler. Then will you be fitter to discuss this point, or any other.

Mr. Merceda. Very right. You have a noble enemy, Sir Hargrave.

Sir Ch. I am no man's enemy, Mr. Merceda. Sir Hargrave should consider, that, in the occasion for all this, he was to blame; and that all *my* part in the affair was owing to accident, not malice.

Mr. Jordan. I doubt not, Sir Charles, but you are ready to ask pardon of Sir Hargrave, for your part—

Sir Ch. Ask pardon, Sir!—No!—I think I *ought* to have done just as I did. Were it to do again, I should do it, whoever were the man.

Sir Har. See there! See there!—Mr. Bagenhall, Mr. Merceda, Mr. Jordan! See there! Hear that!—Who can have patience?

Sir Ch. I can tell you who *ought* to have patience, Sir Hargrave. I should have a very mean opinion of any man here, called upon as I was, if he had not done just as I did: and a still meaner than I have of *you*, Sir Hargrave, had you, in the like case, refused assistance to a woman in distress. But I will not repeat what I have written.

Sir Har. If you are a *man*, Sir Charles Grandi-

son, take your choice of one of those pistols, G— d—n you! I *insist* upon it.

And I saw through the knot-hole, that Sir Hargrave arose in passion.

Sir Ch. As I AM a *man*, Sir Hargrave, I will *not*. It might look to an angry man like an insult, which I am above intending, were I to say, that I have given, on our *first* interview, proofs that I want not courage. I give you now, as I think, the highest I *can* give, in refusing your challenge. A personal insult I know how to repel. I know how to defend myself—But, as I said, I will not repeat any-thing I have written.

Mr. Mer. But, Sir Charles, you have threatened a man of honour in what you have written, if we take you right, with a weapon that ought to be used only to a scoundrel; yet refuse—

Sir Ch. The man, Sir, that shall take it into his head to insult me, may do it with the greater safety, though perhaps not with impunity, as he may be assured I will not kill him for it, if I can help it. I can play with my weapons, Sir (it may look like boasting); but will not play with any man's life, nor consent to make a sport of my own.

Sir Har. D—n your coolness, Sir!—I cannot bear—

Sir Ch. Curse not your safety, Sir Hargrave.

Mr. Jor. Indeed, Sir Charles, I could not bear such an air of superiority—

Sir Ch. It is *more* than an air, Mr. Jordan. The man who can think of justifying one violent action by another, must give a *real* superiority against himself. Let Sir Hargrave confess his fault—I have put him in the way of doing it, with all the credit to himself that a man can have who has *committed* a fault—and I offer him my hand.

Sir Har. Damnable insult!—What! own a fault

to a man who, without any provocation, has dashed my teeth down my throat; and, as you see—Gentlemen—say, Can I, ought I, *now*, to have patience?

Sir Ch. I intended not to do you any of this mischief, Sir Hargrave. I drew not my sword, to return a pass made by yours—Actually received a raking on my shoulder from a sword that was aimed at my heart. I sought nothing but to hinder you from doing that mischief to *me*, which I was resolved not to do to *you*. This, Sir Hargrave, this, gentlemen, was the state of the case; and the cause such, as no man of honour could refuse engaging in.—And now, Sir, I meet you, upon my own invitation, in your own house, unattended, and alone, to shew you, that I have the same disposition as I had from the first, to avoid doing you injury: and *this* it is, gentlemen, that gives me a superiority to Sir Hargrave, which he may lessen, by behaving as I, in this case, would behave to him.

Mr. Bag. By G— this is nobly said.

Mr. Jor. I own, Sir Hargrave, that I would sooner veil to such a man as this than to a king on his throne.

Sir Har. D—n me, if I forgive him, with these marks about me!—I insist upon your taking one of these pistols, Sir.—Gentlemen, my friends, he boasts of his advantages: he *may* have some from his cursed coolness: he can have none any other way. Bear witness, I forgive him if he lodges a brace of bullets in my heart—Take one of those pistols, Sir. They are equally loaded—Bear witness, if I die, that I have provoked my fate. But I will die like a man of honour.

Sir Ch. To *die* like a man of honour, Sir Hargrave, you must have *lived* like one. You should be sure of your cause. But these pistols are too

ready a mischief. Were I to meet you in *your own* way, Sir Hargrave, I should not expect, that a man so enraged would fire his over *my* head, as I should be willing to do mine over *his*. Life I would not put upon the perhaps involuntary twitch of a finger.

Sir Har. Well then. The sword. You came, though undressed, with your sword on.

Sir Ch. I did; and for the reason I gave to Mr. Bagenhall. I draw it not, however, but in my own defence.

Sir Har. (rising from his seat) Will you favour me with your company into my own garden? Only you and I, Sir Charles. Let the gentlemen, my friends, stay here. They shall only look out of the windows, if they please—Only to that grass-plot, Sir (pointing as I saw)—If *you* fall, I shall have the worst of it, from the looks of the matter, killing a man in my own garden: if I fall, you will have the evidence of my friends to bring you off.

Sir Ch. I need not look at the place, Sir Hargrave. And since, gentlemen, it is allowed, that the pistols may be dismissed; and since, by their lying loaded on the table, they seem but to stimulate to mischief; you will all excuse me, and you, Sir Hargrave, will forgive me—

And so saying, he arose, with great tranquillity, as I saw; and taking the pistols, lifted up the sash that was next to that at which Sir Hargrave stood, and discharged them both out of the window.

By the report, the writer is sure they were well loaded.

In ran a crowd of servants, men and women, in dismay. The writer sat still in the closet, knowing the matter to be no worse. One of the men cried out, This is the murderer! And they all (not seeing their master, as I suppose, at the window beyond Sir Charles, and who afterwards owned him-

self too much surprised to stir or speak) were for making up to Sir Charles.

Sir Charles then retiring, put his hand upon his sword: but mildly said, My friends, your master is safe. Take care I hurt not any of you.

Sir Har. I am safe—Begone, scoundrels!

Mr. Bag. Begone! Quit the room. Sir Hargrave is safe.

Mr. Mer. } Begone! Begone!
Mr. Jor. }

The servants, as I saw, crowded out as fast as they came in.

Sir Charles, then stepping towards Sir Hargrave, said, You will, some time hence, Sir, think the discharge of those pistols much happier than if they had been put to the use designed when they were loaded. I offer you my hand: it is an offer that is not to be twice refused. If you have malice to me, I have none to you. I invited myself to *breakfast* with you. You and your friends shall be welcome to *dine* with me. My time is near expired (looking at his watch)—for Sir Hargrave seemed too irresolute either to accept or refuse his hand.

Mr. Jor. I am astonished!—Why, Sir Charles, what a tranquillity must you have within you! The devil take me, Sir Hargrave, if you shall not make up matters with such a noble adversary.

Mr. Mer. He has won me to his side. By the great God of heaven, I had rather have Sir Charles Grandison for my friend than the greatest prince on earth!

Mr. Bag. Did I not *tell* you, gentlemen?—D—n me, if I have not hitherto lived to nothing but to my shame! I had rather be Sir Charles Grandison in this one past hour, than the Great Mogul all my life.

Sir Hargrave even sobbed, as I could hear by his

voice, like a child.—D—n my heart, said he, in broken sentences—And must I thus put up—and must I be thus overcome? By G—, by G—, Grandison, you must, you must, walk down with me into the garden. I have something to propose to you; and it will be in your own choice either to compromise, or to give me the satisfaction of a gentleman: but you must retire with me into the garden.

Sir Ch. With all my heart, Sir Hargrave.

And taking off his sword, he laid it on the table.

Sir Har. And must I do so too?—D—n me, if I do!—Take up your sword, Sir.

Sir Ch. I will, to oblige you, Sir Hargrave. It will be always in my choice to draw it, or not.

Sir Har. D—n me, if I can live to be *thus* treated!—Where the devil have you been till now?—But you must go down with me into the garden.

Sir Ch. Shew me the way, Sir Hargrave.

They all interposed: but Sir Charles said, Pray, gentlemen, let Sir Hargrave have his way. We will attend you presently.

The writer then came out, by the gentlemen's leave, who staid behind, at the windows. They expressed their admiration of Sir Charles. And Mr. Merceda and Mr. Bagenhall (the writer mentions it to their honour) reproached each other, as if they had no notion of what was great and noble in man till now.

Sir Charles and Sir Hargrave soon appeared in sight; walking, and as conversing earnestly. The subject, it seems, was, some proposals made by Sir Hargrave about the lady, which Sir Charles would not comply with. And when they came to the grass-plot, Sir Hargrave threw open his coat and waistcoat, and drew; and seemed, by his motions, to insist upon Sir Charles's drawing likewise. Sir Charles had his sword in one hand; but it was un-

drawn: the other was stuck in his side: his frock was open. Sir Hargrave seemed still to insist upon his drawing, and put himself into a fencing attitude. Sir Charles then calmly stepping towards him, put down Sir Hargrave's sword with his hand, and put his left-arm under Sir Hargrave's sword-arm. Sir Hargrave lifted up the other arm passionately: but Sir Charles, who was on his guard, immediately laid hold of it, and seemed to say something mildly to him; and letting go his left-hand, led him towards the house; his drawn sword still in his hand. Sir Hargrave seemed to expostulate, and to resist being led, though but faintly, and as a man overcome with Sir Charles's behaviour; and they both came up together, Sir Charles's arm still within his sword-arm—[The writer retired to his first place]. D—n me, said Sir Hargrave, as he entered the room, this man, this Sir Charles, is the devil---He has made a mere infant of me. Yet, he tells me, he will not be my friend neither, in the point my heart is set upon. He threw his sword upon the floor. This only I will say, as I said below, Be my friend in that one point, and I will forgive you with all my soul.

Sir Ch. The lady is, must be, her own mistress, Sir Hargrave. I have acquired no title to any influence over her. She is an excellent woman. She would be a jewel in the crown of a prince. But you must allow me to say, she must not be terrified. I do assure you, that her life has been once in danger already: all the care and kindness of my sister and a physician could hardly restore her.

Sir Har. The most inflexible man, devil I should say, I ever saw in my life! But you have no objection to my seeing her. She shall see (yet how can I forgive you that?) what I have suffered in my person for her sake. If she will not be mine, these

marks shall be *hers*, not *yours*. And though I will not terrify her, I will see if she has no pardon, no pity for me. She knows, she *very* well knows, that I was the most honourable of men to her, when she was in my power. By all that's sacred, I intended only to make her Lady Pollexfen. I saw she had as many lovers as visiters, and I could not bear it. —You, Sir Charles, will stand my friend, and if money and love will purchase her, she shall yet be mine.

Sir Ch. I promise you no friendship in this case, Sir Hargrave. All her *relations* leave her, it seems, to her own discretion; and who shall offer to lead her choice? What I said below, when you would have made *that* a condition, I repeat—I think she ought *not* to be yours; nor ought you, either for your own sake or hers, to desire it. Come, come, Sir Hargrave, consider the matter better. Think of some other woman, if you are disposed to marry. Your figure—

Sir Har. Yes, by G—, I make a pretty figure now, don't I?

Sir Ch. Your fortune will make you happier in marriage with any other woman, after what has happened, than this *can* make you. For my own part, let me tell you, Sir Hargrave, I would not marry the greatest princess on earth, if I thought she did not love me above all other men, whether I *deserved* her love or not.

Sir Har. And you have no view to yourself in the advice you give?—Tell me that—I insist upon your telling me that.

Sir Ch. Whenever I pretend to give advice, I should abhor myself, if I did not wholly consider the good of the person who consulted me; and if I had any retrospection to myself, which might in the least affect that person.

The breakfast was then brought in. This that follows was the conversation that passed at and after breakfast.

Mr. Bag. See what a Christian can do, Merceda. After this, will you remain a Jew?

Mr. Mer. Let me see such *another* Christian, and I will give you an answer. You, Bagenhall, I hope, will not think yourself intitled to boast of your Christianity?

Mr. Bag. Too true! We have been both of us sad dogs.

Sir Har. And I have been the most innocent man of the three; and yet, that's the devil of it, am the greatest sufferer. Curse me, if I can bear to look at myself in the glass!

Mr. Jor. You should be above all that, Sir Hargrave. And let me tell you, you need not be ashamed to be overcome, as you are overcome. You really appear to me a *greater*, and not a *less*, man, than you did before, by your compromising with such a noble adversary.

Sir Har. That's some comfort, Jordan. But, d—n me, Sir Charles, I will see the lady: and you shall introduce me to her, too.

Sir Ch. That cannot be—What! shall I introduce a man to a woman, whom I think he ought no more to see, than she should see him? If I thought you would go, I might, if *she* requested it, be there, lest, from what she has suffered already, she should be too much terrified.

Sir Har. What, Sir! You would not turn *Quixote* again?

Sir Ch. No need, Sir Hargrave. You would not again be the *giant* who should run away with the lady.

The gentlemen laughed.

Sir Har. By G—, Sir, you have carried your matters very triumphantly.

Sir Ch. I mean not triumph, Sir Hargrave. But where either truth or justice is concerned, I hope I shall never palliate.

Mr. Bag. Curse me, if I believe there is such another man in the world!

Sir Ch. I am sorry to hear you say that, Mr. Bagenhall. Occasion calls not out every man equally.

Sir Har. Why did I not strike him? D—n me, that must have provoked you to fight.

Sir Ch. Provoked, in that case, I should have been, Sir Hargrave. I told you, that I would not bear to be insulted. But, so warranted to take *other* methods, I should not have used my sword. The case has happened to me before now: but I would be upon friendly terms with you, Sir Hargrave.

Sir Har. Curse me, if I can bear my own littleness!

Sir Ch. When you give this matter your cool attention, you will find reason to rejoice, that an enterprize begun in violence, and carried on so far as you carried it, concluded not worse. Every opportunity you will have for exerting your good qualities, or for repenting of your bad, will contribute to your satisfaction to the end of your life. You could *not* have been happy, had you prevailed over me. Think you, that a murderer ever was a happy man? I am the more serious, because I would have you think of this affair. It *might* have been a *very* serious one.

Sir Har. You know, Sir Charles, that I would have compromised with you below. But not one point—

Sir Ch. Compromise, Sir Hargrave!—As I told you, I had no quarrel with *you*: you proposed con-

ditions, which I thought should not be complied with. I aimed not to carry *any* point. Self-defence, I told you, was the whole of my system.

Mr. Bag. You have given some hints, Sir Charles, that you have not been unused to affairs of this kind.

Sir Ch. I have before now met a challenger; but it was when I could not avoid it; and with the resolution of standing only on my own defence, and in the hope of making an enemy a friend. Had I—

Mr. Bag. What poor toads, Merceda, are we!

Mr. Mer. Be silent, Bagenhall; Sir Charles had not done speaking. Pray, Sir Charles—

Sir Ch. I was going to say, that had I ever premeditatedly given way to a challenge, that I *could* have declined, I should have considered the acceptance of it as the greatest blot of my life. I am naturally choleric; yet, in this article, I hope I have pretty much subdued myself. In the affair between Sir Hargrave and me, I have the pleasure to reflect, that *passion*, which I hold to be my most dangerous enemy, has not had, in any one moment, an ascendancy over me.

Sir Har. No, by my soul! And how should it? You came off too triumphantly: *you* were not hurt: *you* have no *marks* to shew. May I be cursed, if, in forgiving you, which yet I know not how to do, I do not think myself the greater hero?

Sir Ch. I will not contest that point with you, Sir Hargrave. There is no doubt but the man who can subdue his passion, and forgive a *real* injury, is a hero. Only remember, Sir, that it was not owing to your *virtue* that I was not hurt; and that it was not my *intention* to hurt *you.*

Mr. Jor. I am charmed with your sentiments, Sir Charles. You must allow me the honour of your acquaintance. We all acknowledge duelling to be

criminal: but nó one has the courage to break through a bad custom.

Sir Ch. The empty, the *false* glory, that men have to be thought brave, and the apprehension of being deemed cowards among men, and among *women* too, very few men aim to get above.

Mr. Jor. But you, Sir Charles, have shewn that reputation and conscience are entirely reconcileable.

Mr. Bag. You have, by Heaven! And I beg of you, Sir, to allow me to claim your further acquaintance. You may save a soul by it.—Merceda, what say you?

Mr. Mer. Say! What a devil can I say? But the *doctrine* would have been nothing without the *example.*

Sir Har. And all this at my expence!—But, Sir Charles, I must, I will have Miss Byron.

Mr. Jor. I think every-thing impertinent, that hinders me from asking questions for my information and instruction, of a man so capable of giving both, on a subject of this importance. Allow me, Sir Charles, to ask a few questions, in order to confirm me quite your proselyte.

Sir Ch. [taking out his watch, as I saw] Time wears. Let my servant be called in. The weather is cold. I directed him to attend before the door.

It was immediately ordered, with apologies.

Sir Ch. Ask me, Mr. Jordan, what questions you please.

Mr. Jor. You have been challenged more than once, I presume.

Sir Ch. I am not a quarrelsome man: but as it was early known that I made it a principle not to engage in a duel, I was the more subjected, I have reason to think, for that, to inconveniencies of this nature.

Mr. Jor. Had you always, Sir Charles, that mag-

nanimity, that intrepidity, that steadiness, I know not what to call it, which we have seen and admire in you?

Sir Ch. I have always considered spirit as the distinction of a man. My father was a man of spirit. I never feared man, since I could write man. As I never sought danger, or went out of my way to meet it, I looked upon it when it came, as an unavoidable evil, and as a call upon me for fortitude. And hence I hardly ever wanted that presence of mind in it which a man ought to shew; and which sometimes, indeed, was the means of extricating me from it.

Sir Har. An instance of which this morning, I suppose you think, has produced?

Sir Ch. I had not that in my head. In Italy, indeed, I should hardly have acted as in the instance you hint at. But in England, and, Sir Hargrave, I was willing to think, in Cavendish Square, I could not but conclude myself safe. I know my own heart. I wished you no evil, Sir. I was calm. I *expected* to meet you full of fire, full of resentment: but it is hard, thought I (as some extraordinary step seems necessary to be taken) if I cannot content myself with that superiority (excuse me, Sir Hargrave) which my calmness, and Sir Hargrave's passion, must give me over him, or any man. My sword was in my power. Had I even apprehended assassination, the house of an English gentleman could not have been the place for it; and where a confidence was reposed. But one particular instance, I own, I had in my mind, when I said what I did.

All the gentlemen besought him to give it.

Sir Ch. In the raging of the war, now, so seasonably for all the powers at variance, concluded, I was passing through a wood in Germany, in my way to

Manheim. My servant, at some distance before me, was endeavouring to find out the right road, there being more than one. He rode back affrighted, and told me he had heard a loud cry of murder, succeeded by groans, which grew fainter and fainter, as those of a dying person; and besought me to make the best of my way back. As I was thinking to do so (though my way lay through the wood, and I had got more than half-way in it) I beheld six Pandours issue from that inner part of the wood, into which, in all probability, they had dragged some unhappy passenger; for I saw a horse bridled and saddled, without a rider, grazing by the road-side. They were well armed. I saw no way to escape. They probably knew every avenue in and out of the wood: I did not. They stopped when they came within two musquet-shots of me, as if they had waited to see which way I took. Two of them had dead poultry slung across their shoulders, which shewed them to be common plunderers. I took a resolution to ride up to them. I bid my servant, if he saw me attacked, make the best of his way for his own security, while they were employed either in rifling or murdering me; but, if they suffered me to pass, to follow me. He had no portmanteau to tempt them. That, and my other baggage, I had caused to be sent by water to Manheim.—I am an Englishman, gentlemen, said I (judging, if Austrians, as I supposed they were, that plea would not disavail me): I am doubtful of my way. Here is a purse; holding it out. As soldiers, you must be gentlemen: it is at your service, if one or two of you will be so kind as to escort and guide me through this wood. They looked upon one another: I was loth they should have time to deliberate—I am upon business of great consequence.

Pray direct me the nearest way to Manheim. Take these florins.

At last, one that seemed of authority among them, held out his hand; and, taking the purse, said something in Sclavonian; and two of them, with their pieces slung on their shoulders, and their sabres drawn, led me out of the wood in safety; but hoped, at parting, my farther generosity. I found a few more florins for them; and they rode back into the wood; I suppose to their fellows; and glad I was to come off so well. Had I either seemed afraid of them, or endeavoured to escape, probably I had been lost. Two persons were afterwards found murdered in the wood; one of them, perhaps, the unhappy man whom my servant had heard cry out, and groan.

Mr. Jor. I feel *now* very sensibly, Sir Charles, your danger and escape: Your fortitude indeed was *then* of service to you.

Sir Har. But, Sir Charles, methinks I shall be easier in myself, if you give me one instance of your making, before now, an enemy, a friend. Have you one in point?

Sir Ch. Stories of this nature come very ill from a man's own mouth.

Sir Har. I *must* have it, Sir Charles. A brother-sufferer will better reconcile me to myself.

Sir Ch. If you will *not* excuse me then, I will tell you the story.

Mr. Jor. Pray, Sir—

Sir Ch. I had a misunderstanding at Venice with a young gentleman of the place. He was about twenty-two. I was a year younger.

Mr. Bag. At the Carnival, I suppose?—About a lady, Sir Charles?

Sir Ch. He was the only son of a noble Venetian family, who had great expectations from him. He

was a youth of genius. Another noble family at Urbino, to which he was to be allied in marriage, had also an interest in his welfare. We had made a friendship together at Padua. I was at Venice by his invitation, and stood well with all his family. He took offence against me, at the instigation of a designing relation of his; to own the truth, a lady, as you suppose, Mr. Bagenhall, his sister. He would not allow me to defend my innocence to the face of the accuser; nor yet to appeal to his father, who was a person of temper as well as sense. On the contrary, he upbraided me in a manner that I could hardly bear. I was resolved to quit Venice; and took leave of his whole family, the lady excepted, who would not be seen by me. The father and mother parted with me with regret. The young gentleman had so managed, that I could not with honour appeal to them; and, at taking leave of him in their presence, under pretence of a recommendatory letter, he gave into my hand a challenge. The answer I returned, after protesting my innocence, was to this effect: "I am setting out for Verona in a few hours. You know my principles; and I hope will better consider of the matter. I never, while I am master of my temper, will give myself so much cause of repentance to the last hour of my life, as I should have, were I to draw my sword to the irreparable injury of any man's family; or to run the same risk of injuring my own, and of incurring the final perdition of us both!"

Mr. Mer. This answer rather provoked than satisfied, I suppose?

Sir Ch. Provocation was not my *intention.* I designed only to remind him of the obligations we were both under to our respective families, and to throw in a hint of a still superior consideration. It was likely to have more force in that Roman Catholic

country than, I am sorry to say it, it would in this Protestant one.

Sir Har. How, how, Sir Charles, did it end?

Sir Ch. I went to Verona. He followed me thither; and endeavoured to provoke me to draw. Why should I draw? said I. Will the decision by the sword be *certainly* that of justice? You are in a passion. You have no reason to doubt either my skill or my courage [on such an occasion, gentlemen, and with such a view, a man may perhaps be allowed to give himself a little consequence]: and solemnly once more do I avow my innocence; and desire to be brought face to face with my accusers.

He raved the more for my calmness. I turned from him, with intent to leave him. He thought fit to offer me a personal insult—I now, methinks, blush to tell it—He gave me a box on the ear, to provoke me to draw—

Mr. Mer. And *did* you draw, Sir?

Mr. Bag. To be sure, you *then* drew?

Mr. Jor. Pray, Sir Charles, let us know. You could not then *help* drawing? This was a provocation that would justify a saint.

Sir Ch. He had forgot, in that passionate moment, that *he* was a gentleman. I did not remember that *I* was one. But I had no occasion to draw.

Sir Har. What a plague—You did not cane him?

Sir Ch. He got well after a fortnight's lying-by.

Sir Har. Damnation!

Sir Ch. I put him into possession of the lodgings I had taken for myself, and into proper and safe hands. He was indeed unable for a day or two to direct for himself. I sent for his friends. His servant did me justice as to the provocation. Then it was that I was obliged, in a letter, to acquaint the father of a discovery I had made, which the son had refused to hear; which, with the lady's confession, convinced them

all of my innocence. His father acknowledged my moderation; as the young gentleman himself did, desiring a renewal of friendship: but as I thought the affair had gone too far for a cordial reconciliation, and knew that he would not want instigators to urge him to resent an indignity, which he had, however, brought upon himself, by a greater offered to me, I took leave of him and his friends, and revisited some of the German courts; that of Vienna in particular; where I resided some time.

In the mean while, the young gentleman married. His lady, of the Altieri family, is an excellent woman. He had a great fortune with her. Soon after his nuptials, he let me know, that, as he doubted not, if I had drawn my sword, I should, from his violence at the time, have had his life in my power, he could not but acknowledge that he owed all his acquisitions, and the best of wives, as well as the happiness of both families, with *that* life, to me.

I apply not this instance: but, Sir Hargrave, as I hope to see you married, and happy, though it can never be, I think, to Miss Byron, such generous acknowledgments as misbecome not an Italian, I shall then hope for from an Englishman.

Sir Har. And had your Italian any marks left him, Sir?—Depend upon it, I shall never look into a glass, but I shall curse you to the very pit!

Sir Ch. Well, Sir Hargrave: this only I will add; That be as sensible as you will, and *as I am*, of the happy issue of this untoward affair, I will never expect a compliment from you, that shall tend to your abasement.

Mr. Jor. Your hand, Sir Hargrave, to Sir Charles—

Sir Har. What! without terms?—Curse me, if I do!—But let him bring Miss Byron in his hand to

me (that is the least he can do): then may I thank him for my wife.

Sir Charles made some smiling answer: but the writer heard it not.

Sir Charles would then have taken leave: but all the gentlemen, Sir Hargrave among the rest, were earnest with him to stay a little longer.

Mr. Jor. My conversion must be perfected, Sir Charles. This is a subject that concerns us all. *We shall remember every tittle of the conversation;* and think of it, when we do not see you.—Let me beg of you to acquaint me, how you came to differ from all other men of honour in your practice, as well as in your notions, upon this subject?

Sir Ch. I will answer your question, Mr. Jordan, as briefly as I can.

My father was a man of spirit. He had high notions of honour, and he inspired me early with the same. I had not passed my twelfth year, when he gave me a master to teach me what is called, the science of defence. I was fond of the practice, and soon obtained such a skill in the weapons, as pleased both my father and master. I had strength of body beyond my years: the exercise added to it. I had agility; it added to my agility: and the praises given me by my father and master, so heightened my courage, that I was almost inclined to wish for a subject to exercise it upon. My mother was an excellent woman: she had instilled into my earliest youth, almost from infancy, notions of moral rectitude, and the first principles of Christianity; now rather ridiculed than inculcated in our youth of condition. She was ready sometimes to tremble at the consequences, which she thought might follow from the attention which I paid (thus encouraged and applauded) to this *practice;* and was continually reading lectures to me upon *true* magnanimity, and upon the law of kind-

ness, benevolence, and forgiveness of injuries. Had I not lost her so soon as I did, I should have been a more perfect scholar than I am in these noble doctrines. As she knew me to be naturally hasty, and very sensible of affronts; and as she had observed, as she told me, that even in the delight she had brought me to take in doing good, I shewed an over-readiness, even to rashness, which she thought might lead me into errors, that would more than overbalance the good I aimed to do; she redoubled her efforts to keep me right: and on this particular acquirement of a skill in the management of the weapons, she frequently enforced upon me an observation of Mr. Locke: "That young men, in their warm blood, are often forward to think they have in vain learned to fence, if they never shew their skill in a duel."

This observation, insisted upon, and inculcated, as she knew how, was very seasonable at that time of danger. And she never forgot to urge upon me, that the science I was learning, was a science properly called of *defence*, and not of *offence;* at the same time endeavouring to caution me against the low company into which a dexterity at my weapons might lead me, as well as against the diversions themselves exhibited at the infamous places where those brutal people resorted: infamous even by name*, as well as in the nature of them.

From her instructions, I had an early notion, that it was much more noble to forgive an injury than to resent it; and to give a life, than to take it. My father, (I honour his memory!) was a man of gaiety, of munificence. He had great qualities. But my mother was my oracle. And he was always so just to her merit, as to command me to consider her as

* Hockley in the Hole, Bear-Garden, &c.

such; and the rather, he used to say, as she distinguished well between the *false* glory and the *true*; and would not have her boy a coward.

Mr. Mer. A good beginning, by my life!

Mr. Jor. Pray proceed, Sir Charles. I am all attention.

Sir Har. Ay, ay, we all listen.

Mr. Bag. Curse him that speaks next, to interrupt you.

Sir Ch. But what indelibly impressed upon my heart my mother's lessons, was an occurrence, which, and the consequences of it, I shall ever deplore. My father, having taken leave of my mother, on a proposed absence of a few days, was, in an hour after, brought home, as it was thought, *mortally* wounded in a duel. My mother's surprise on this occasion threw her into fits, from which she never after was wholly free. And these, and the dangerous way he continued in for some time, brought her into an ill state of health; broke, in short, her constitution; so that in less than a twelvemonth, my father, to his inexpressible anguish of mind (continually reproaching himself on the occasion) lost the best of wives, and my sisters and I the best of mothers and instructors.

My concern for my father, on whom I was an hourly attendant throughout the whole time of his confinement; and my being by that means a witness of what both he and my mother suffered; completed my abhorrence of the vile practice of duelling. I went on, however, in endeavouring to make myself a master of the *science*, as it is called; and, among the other weapons, of the *staff*; the better to enable me to avoid drawing my sword, and to impower me, if called to the occasion, to give and not take, a life; and the rather, as the custom was so general, that a young man of spirit and fortune, at one time

or other, could hardly expect to escape a provocation of this sort.

My father once had a view, at the persuasion of my mother's brother, who was a general of note and interest in the Imperial service, and who was very fond of a military life, and of me, to make a soldier of me, though an only son; and I wanted not, when a boy, a turn that way: but the disgust I had conceived, on the above occasion, against duelling, and the consideration of the absurd alternative which the gentlemen of our army are under, either to accept a challenge, contrary to laws divine and human, or to be broke, if they do not (though a soldier is the least master of himself, or of his own life, of any man in the community) made me think the English service, though that of my country, the least eligible of all services. And for a man, who was born to so considerable a stake in it, to devote himself to another, as my uncle had done, from principles which I approved not, I could not but hesitate on the proposal, young as I was. As it soon became a maxim with me, not to engage, even in a national cause, without examining the justice of it, it will be the less wondered at, that I could not think of any foreign service.

Mr. Bag. Then you have never seen service, Sir Charles?

Sir Ch. Yes, I made one campaign as a volunteer, notwithstanding what I have said. I was then in the midst of marching armies, and could not tell how to abate the ardour those martial movements had raised in my breast. But unless my country were to be unjustly invaded by a foreign enemy, I think I would not, on any consideration, be drawn into the field again.

Mr. Jor. But you lead from the point, Mr. Ba-

genhall: Sir Charles was going to say somewhat more on the subject of duelling.

Sir Ch. When I was thus unhappily deprived of my mother, my father, in order to abate my grief [I was very much grieved] was pleased to consent to my going abroad, in order to make the grand tour, as it is called; having first visited all the British dominions in Europe, Gibraltar and Minorca excepted. I then supposing I might fall into circumstances that might affect the principles my mother had been so careful to instil into me, and to which my father's danger, and her death, had added force, it was natural for me to look into history, for the rise and progress of a custom so much and so justly my aversion; and which was so contrary to all laws divine and human, and particularly to that true heroism which Christianity injoins, when it recommends meekness, moderation, and humility, as the glory of the human nature. But I am running into length.

Again Sir Charles took out his watch. They were clamorous for him to proceed.

When I found, continued he, that this unchristian custom owed its rise to the barbarous northern nations, who had, however, some plea to make in excuse, which *we* have not, as they were governed by particular lords, and were not united under *one* head or government, to which, as to a last resort, persons supposing themselves aggrieved, might appeal for legal redress; and that these barbarous nations were *truly* barbarous, and enemies to all politeness; my reasoning on this occasion added new force to prejudices so well founded.

The gentlemen seemed afraid that Sir Charles had done speaking. They begged he would go on.

I then had recourse, proceeded he, to the histories of nations famous for their courage. That of

the Romans, who by that quality obtained the empire of the world, was my first subject. I found not any traces in their history, which could countenance the savage custom. When a dispute happened, the challenge from both parties generally was, "That each should appear at the head of the army the next engagement, and give proofs of his intrepidity against the common foe." The instance of the *Horatii* and *Curiatii*, which was a *public*, a *national* combat, as I may call it, affords not an exception to my observation. And yet even *that*, in the *early ages* of Rome, stands condemned by a better example. For we read, that Tullus challenged Albanus, general of the Albans, to put the cause of the two nations upon the valour of each captain's arm, for the sake of sparing a greater effusion of blood: but what was the answer of Albanus, though the inducement to the challenge was so plausible? "That the cause was a public, not a private one; and the decision lay upon the two cities of Alba and Rome."

Many ages afterwards, Augustus received a challenge from Mark Antony. Who, gentlemen, thought of branding as a coward that prince, on his answering, "That if Antony were weary of his life, he might find many *other* ways to end it than by *his* sword?"

Metellus, before that, challenged by Sertorius, answered with his pen, not his sword, "That it was not for a captain to die the death of a common soldier."

The very Turks know nothing of this savage custom: and they are a nation that raised themselves by their bravery from the most obscure beginnings, into one of the greatest empires on the globe, as at this day. They take occasion to exalt themselves above Christians, in this very instance; and think it a scandal upon Mussulmans to quarrel, and endea-

vour to wreak their private vengeance on one another.

All the Christian doctrines, as I have hinted, are in point against it. But it is dreadful to reflect, that the man who would endeavour to support his arguments against this infamous practice of duelling, by the laws of Christianity, though the most excellent of all laws [Excuse me, Mr. Merceda, your own are *included* in them] would subject himself to the ridicule of persons who call themselves Christians. I have mentioned therefore Heathens and Mahometans; though in this company, perhaps—But I hope I need not, however, remind any-body here, that that one doctrine of returning *good* for *evil*, is a nobler and more heroic doctrine than *either* of those people, or your *own*, Mr. Merceda, ever knew.

Mr. Jor. You have shewn it, Sir Charles, by example, by practice, to be so. I never saw a hero till now.

Sir Ch. One *modern* instance, however, of a challenge refused, I recollect, and which may be given, by way of *inference*, at least, to the advantage of my argument. The army of the famous mareschal Turenne, in revenge for injuries more than hostile, as was pretended, had committed terrible depredations in the Palatinate. The elector, incensed at the unsoldierly destruction, challenged the mareschal to a single combat. The mareschal's answer was to this effect: "That if the trust which the king his master had reposed in him, would permit him to accept of his challenge, he would not refuse it; but, on the contrary, would deem it an honour to measure his arms with those of so illustrious a prince: but that, for the sake of his master's service, he must be excused."

Now, though I think the mareschal might have returned a still better answer (though this was not

a bad one for a military man); yet where we can, as Christians and as men, plead the divine laws, and have not, when we meet, as private subjects, the mareschal's, nor even the *Goths* excuse, I think the example worthy consideration.

And if, gentlemen, I *have* argued before now, or should I hereafter argue, as follows, to a challenger, shall I deserve either to be branded or insulted?

"Of what use are the laws of society, if magistracy may be thus defied? Were I to accept of your challenge, and were you to prevail against me, who is to challenge you; and if you fall, who him by whose sword you perish? Where, in short, is the evil to stop? But I will *not* meet you: my system is self-defence, and self-defence only. Put me upon *that*, and I question not but you will have cause to repent it. A *premeditated* revenge is that which I will not meet you to gratify. I will not dare to risk the rushing into my Maker's presence from the consequences of an act, which cannot, in the man that falls, admit of repentance, and leaves for the survivor's portion nothing but bitter remorse. I fear not any more the reproaches of men, than your insults on this occasion. Be the latter offered to me at your *peril*. It is perhaps as happy for you as for myself, that I have a fear of an higher nature. Be the event what it will, the test you would provoke me to, can decide nothing as to the justice of the cause on either side. Already you will find me disposed to do you the justice you pretend to seek. For your own sake, therefore, consider better of the matter; since it is not impossible, but, were we to meet, and both survive, you may exchange, what you will think a real disgrace, for an imaginary one."

And thus, gentlemen, have I almost syllogistically argued with myself on this subject:

Courage is a virtue;
Inordinate passion is a vice:
Such passion, therefore, cannot be courage.

Does it not then behove every man of true honour to shew, that reason has a greater share than resentment in the boldness of his resolves?

And what, by any degree, is *so* reasonable as a regard to our duty?

You called upon me, gentlemen, to communicate my notions on this important subject. I have the more willingly obeyed you, as I hope Sir Hargrave, on the occasion that brought us to this not unhappy breakfasting, will be the better satisfied that it has so ended; and as, if you are so good as to adopt them, they may be of service to others of your friends, in case of debates among them. Indeed, for my own sake, I have always been ready to communicate my notions on this head, in hopes sometimes to be spared provocation: for, as I have owned, I am passionate: I have pride: I am often afraid of *myself*; and the more, because I am not naturally, I will presume to say, a timid man.

Mr. Bag. 'Fore God, Sir Hargrave, somebody has escaped a scouring, as the saying is.

Mr. Mer. Ay, by my life, Sir Hargrave, you had like to have caught a Tartar.

Sir Ch. The race is not always to the swift, gentlemen. Sir Hargrave's passion would, doubtless, have laid him under disadvantage. Defence is guarded: offence exposes itself.

Mr. Bag. But, Sir Charles, you despise no man, I am sure, for differing from you in opinion. I am a Catholic—

Sir Ch. A *Roman* catholic—No religion teaches a man evil. I honour *every man* who lives up to what he professes.

Mr. Bag. But that is not the case with me, I doubt.

Mr. Mer. That is *out* of doubt, Bagenhall.

Mr. Jor. The truth is, Mr. Bagenhall has found his convenience in changing. He was brought up a Protestant. These *dispensations*, Mr. Bagenhall!—

Mr. Mer. Ay, and they were often an argument in Bagenhall's mouth, for making me his proselyte.

Sir Ch. Mr. Bagenhall, I perceive, is rather of the religion of the *court* than of that of the *church* of Rome.

Mr. Bag. But what I mean, by telling you I am a Catholic, is this: I have read the opinion of some of our famous casuists, that, in some cases, a private man may become his own avenger, and challenge an enemy into the field.

Sir Ch. Bannes and *Cajetan*, you mean; one a Spaniard, the other an Italian. But the highest authority of your church is full against them in this point. The council of Trent treats the combatants who fall as self-murderers, and denies them christian burial. It brands them, and all those who by their presence countenance and abet this shocking and unchristian practice, with perpetual infamy; and condemns them to the loss of goods and estates. And furthermore, it deprives, *ipso jure*, all those sovereign princes, who suffer such acts of violence to be perpetrated with impunity in the lands and cities which they hold of the church, of all the territories so held. I need not add to this, that Lewis the XIVth's edict against duelling was the greatest glory of his reign. And permit me to conclude with observing, that the base arts of poisoning, by the means of treacherous agents, and the cowardly practice of assassination by bravoes hired on purpose to wreak a private revenge, so frequent in Italy, are natural *branches* of

this old *Gothic tree.* And yet (as I have before hinted) the barbarous northern nations had pleas to make in behalf of duelling, from *their* polity, which we have not from *ours;* Christianity out of the question.

The gentlemen said, they would very seriously reflect upon all that had passed in this uncommon conversation.

Sir Har. Well, but, Sir Charles, I must recur to my old note—Miss Byron—She *must* be mine. And I hope you will not stand in my way.

Sir Ch. The lady is her own mistress. I shall be glad to see any and all of you, gentlemen, in St. James's Square.

Mr. Bag. One thing I believe it is proper to mention to Sir Charles Grandison. You know, Sir, that I brought a young man to your house, to take minutes of the conversation that passed between you and me there, in apprehension of consequences. In *like* apprehensions, I prevailed upon Sir Hargrave—

Sir Har. And now, Bagenhall, I could curse you for it. The affair—confound it!—that I meant to be recorded for my own justification, has turned out to his honour. Now am I down in black and white, for a tame—fool.—Is it not so?

Mr. Jor. By no means. If you think so, Sir Hargrave, you have but ill profited by Sir Charles's noble sentiments.

Sir Ch. How is this, Mr. Bagenhall?

Mr. Bag. I prevailed upon Sir Hargrave to have the same young man, who is honest, discreet, and one of the swiftest short-hand writers of the age, to take a faithful account of every-thing that has passed; and he is in that closet.

Sir Ch. I must say, this is very extraordinary—But as I always speak what I think, if I am not afraid of

my own recollection, I need not of any man's minutes.

Mr. Bag. You need not in this case, Sir Charles. Nothing has passed, as Sir Hargrave observes, but what makes for your honour. We that set him to work, have more need to be afraid than you. We bid him be honest, and not spare any of us. We little thought matters would have ended so amicably.

Mr. Jor. Thank God they have!

Mr. Mer. A very happy ending, I think!

Sir Har. Not except Miss Byron consents to wipe out these marks.

Mr. Bag. Mr. Cotes, your task is over. Pray step in with what you have done.

The writer obeyed. Mr. Bagenhall asked, If the minutes should be read? Sir Hargrave swore No; except, as he said, he had made a better figure in the debate. Sir Charles told them, he could not stay to hear them: but that, as they *were* written, and as he had been allowed before a copy of what passed between him and Mr. Bagenhall, he should be glad to have one now; and the rather, as Sir Hargrave should have an instance, after he had perused it, of his readiness to condemn himself, if he found he had been wanting either to his own character, or to that of any man present.

They consented that I should send Sir Charles the first fair copy. Sir Charles then took his leave.

The gentlemen all stood silent for several minutes, when they returned from attending him to the door, looking upon one another as if each expected the other to speak: but when they spoke, it was all in praise of Sir Charles, as the most modest, the most polite, the bravest, and noblest

of men. Yet his maxims, they said, were confoundedly strange; impossible for such sorry dogs as them (that was their phrase) to practise.

But Sir Hargrave seemed greatly disturbed and dejected. He could not, he said, support himself under the consciousness of his own inferiority. But what could I do? said he. The *devil* could not have made him fight. Plague take him! he beat me out of my play.

And yet, said Mr. Merceda, a tilting-bout seems no more to him than a game at pushpin.

You would have thought so, said Sir Hargrave, had you observed with what a sleight, and with what unconcernedness, he pushed down my drawn sword with his hand (though he would grant me nothing) and took me under the arm, and led me in to you, as though he had taken me prisoner. The devil has long, continued he, owed me a shame: but who would have thought he had so much power over Sir Charles Grandison, as to get him to pay it me? But, however, I never will be easy till Miss Byron is Lady Pollexfen.

I take leave, honoured Sir, to observe, that a few things are noted in this copy, which, to avoid giving offence, will not be in that I shall write for the gentlemen. I was ordered to shew it to Mr. Bagenhall, before you had it; but, for this reason, I shall excuse myself, as having not remembered that command.

This, therefore, is a true copy of *all* that passed, taken to the best of the ability of, Sir, give me leave to suscribe,

Your very great admirer
and most humble servant,

HENRY COTES.

CONTINUATION OF MISS BYRON'S LETTER.

WHAT a pacquet, including the short-hand writer's paper, transcribed by my cousin Reeves, shall I send you this time! I will not swell it by reflections on that paper (that would be endless); but hasten to give you some account of the visiters I mentioned.

Sir Hargrave Pollexfen came without any previous notice about nine o'clock.

My heart sunk, when his chair stopt at the door, and I was told who was in it.

He was shewn into the great parlour. My cousin Reeves's soon attended him. He made great apologies to them (and so Mr. Reeves said he ought) for the disturbance he had given them.

He laid all to love—Prostituted name! made a cover to all acts of violence, indiscretion, folly, in both sexes!

I was in my own apartment. Mrs. Reeves came up to me. She found me in terror; and went down and told him so; and begged, that he would not insist upon seeing me.

The whole intent of this visit he said, was to beg me to forgive him. It was probable, that I should have the same emotion upon his first visit at any other time; and he entreated the favour of seeing me. He had a *right*, he said, to see me: he was a sufferer for my sake. They saw, he told them, that he was not the man he had *been;* and as he had been denied, and been brought to deny himself, the satisfaction due to a gentleman, from a man whom he had never offended, he insisted on having the opportunity given him of seeing me, and receiving my forgiveness, as what would consolidate his reconciliation with Sir Charles Grandison.

There was no resisting this plea.

And down I *trembled;* I can hardly say walked.

Notwithstanding all my little reasoning with myself, to behave with the dignity of an injured person; yet the moment I saw him approach me, at my entrance into the parlour, I ran to Mr. Reeves, and caught hold of his arm, with looks, I doubt not, of terror. Had Sir Charles Grandison been there, I suppose, I should have run to him in the same manner.

Ever-dear and adorable goodness! (were his words, coming to me) how sweet is this terror, and how just! *I* have forgiven worse injuries, pointing to his mouth. I meant nothing but honour to *you.*

Honour, Sir! Cruelty, Sir! Barbarity, Sir! How can you *wish* to see the creature whom you so wickedly treated?

I appeal to yourself, madam, if I offered the least indecency!—For all I have suffered by my mad enterprize, what but disgrace—

Disgrace, Sir, was your portion, Sir (half out of breath)—What *would* you, Sir?—Why this visit? What am I to do?

I hardly knew what I said; and still I held Mr. Reeves's arm.

Forgive me, madam: *that* is what you are to do: pardon me: on my knee I beg your pardon. And he dropt down on one knee.

Kneel not to me, Sir—Pray, do not kneel—You bruised, you hurt, you terrified me, Sir—And, Lord bless me! I was in danger of being your *wife*, Sir?

Was not this last part of my answer a very odd one? But the memory of what I suffered at the time, and of the narrow escape I had, left me not the least presence of mind, on his address to me, kneeling.

He arose. *In danger of being my wife*, madam! Only that the method I took was wrong, madam!

Miss Byron, you see, is in terror, Sir Hargrave.—Sit down, my love (taking my hand, and leading me to the fire-side) How you tremble, my dear!—You see, Sir Hargrave, the terror my cousin is in—You see—

I do—I do; and am sorry for the occasion—We will all sit down. Compose yourself, dear Miss Byron—And (holding up his clasped hands to me) I beseech you, forgive me.

Well, Sir, I forgive you—I forgive you, Sir.

Were you not in so much disorder, madam—Were it to be seasonable now—I would tell you what I have further to beg. I would—

Speak, Sir, now; and never let me—

Suffer an interruption, madam—I am too apprehensive of that word *never*. You *must* allow of my address. I ask you not any favour, but as I shall behave myself in future.

Yes, yes, Sir, your behaviour—But, Sir, were you to become the best man in the world, this, this, is the last time that I ever—

Dear Miss Byron! And then he pleaded his passion; his fortune; his *sufferings*—A wretch! [Yet I had now-and-then a little pity for his disfigured mouth and lip]—His resolutions to be governed by me in every act of his life—The settlement of one half of his estate upon me.—The *odious* wretch mentioned *children*, my dear—*younger* children. He ran on in such a manner as if he had been drawing up marriage-articles all the way hither.

Upon my absolutely renouncing him, he asked me, If Sir Charles Grandison had not made an impression on my heart?

What, Lucy, could make me inwardly fret at this question? I could hardly have patience to reply.

I now see, my dear, that I have indeed a great deal of pride.

Surely, Sir Hargrave, I am not accountable to you—

You are not, madam: but I must insist upon an answer to this question. If Sir Charles Grandison has made an application to you for favour, I can have no hope.

Sir Charles Grandison, Sir, is absolutely disinterested. Sir Charles Grandison has made—There I stopt; I could not help it.

No application to my cousin, I assure you, Sir Hargrave, said Mr. Reeves. He is the noblest of men. Had he any such thoughts, I dare say, he would be under difficulties to break his mind, lest such a declaration should be thought to lessen the merit of his protection.

A good thought of Mr. Reeves. And who knows, my Lucy, but there may be some foundation for it?

Protection! D—n it!—But I am the *easier* upon this assurance. Let me tell you, Mr. Reeves, that, had I not found him to be a wonder of a man, matters should not have ended as they seem at present to have done.

But, Sir Hargrave, said Mrs. Reeves, permit me to say, as I know Miss Byron's mind, that there cannot be the least room to imagine that Miss Byron—

Dear Mrs. Reeves, forgive me. But I cannot receive a denial from any other mouth than hers. Is there no room for a sincere penitent to hope for mercy from a sweetness so angelic, and who is absolutely disengaged!

You have had *mine* already, Sir Hargrave, said I. I am amazed, that, knowing my mind *before* your wicked insult upon me, you should have any expectation of this kind *after* it.

He again vowed his passion, and such stuff.

I think, Lucy, I never shall be able, for the future, to hear with patience any man talk of love, of passion, and such nonsense.

Let me summarily add, for I am tired of the subject, that he said a hundred impertinent things, sillier than any of those said by Mr. Grandison in my praise [indeed every-thing of this nature now appears silly to me]—He insisted upon a preference to Mr. Greville, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Orme.—He resolved not to despair, as his sufferings for my sake had given him (as he said he presumed to tell me) some merit in his *own* opinion if not in *mine*; and as his forgiveness of the man who had injured him, ought, he thought, to have some weight in his favour.

He took leave of my cousins and me in a very respectful manner. I wish him no harm. But I hope I shall never see him again.

And now, Lucy, with the end of this very disagreeable visit, I will conclude my letter; and shall have another long one ready for the next post.

LETTER V.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS LUCY SELBY.

March 3.

I HAD not recovered myself after Sir Hargrave's visit, when Lady L. and Miss Grandison called, as they said for a moment; however, this agreeable moment lasted two hours. Miss Grandison, the instant she saw me, challenged me—Hey day! What's the matter with our Harriet, Mrs. Reeves? And, patting my neck. Why these flutters, child—Perturbations delightful, or undelightful, Harriet, whether?

I told her who had been here, and but just left me; and, by the help of my cousins, gave them the particulars of what had passed.

They were greatly pleased; and the more, they said, as their brother, on seeing them uneasy, had acquainted them, that all matters between him and Sir Hargrave were accommodated; but had not had opportunity to tell them more.

Let me reckon with you, Harriet, said Miss Grandison (taking my hand with a schooling air): I am half-jealous of you: Lady L. has got the start of me in my brother's affections: but she is my elder sister; first come, first served; I can bear that: but I will not be cut out by a younger sister.

What is now to follow? thought I; and I fluttered like a fool; the more for her arch look, as if she would read my heart in my eyes.

Increased palpitation (O the fool!) made it look as if I took her jest for earnest. What a situation am I in!

Dear Charlotte, said Lady L. smiling, you shall not thus perplex our sweet sister.—My dear, don't mind her. You'll know her better in time.

Be quiet, Lady L. I shall have it all out.

All what out? said I. O Miss Grandison, how you love to alarm!

Well, well, I'll examine farther into these perturbations another time. I have beat the bush before now for one hare, and out have popt two. But all I mean is; a paper, a letter (my brother called it a paper) was brought to him sealed up. He rewarded the bringer; but sent it directly away unopened (that we found out) to you, Harriet. Now, child, if I allow of *his* reserves, I will not allow of *yours*. Pray answer me fairly and truly; What are the contents of that paper?

They give the particulars of the conversation

that passed in the alarming interview between Sir Charles—

And Sir Hargrave. That's my good girl. You see, Lady L. how this young thief will steal away the affections of our brother from us both. He has shewed *us* nothing of this. But if you would not have me jealous, Harriet, be sure keep no one secret of your heart from me—

That relates merely to myself, I think I will not.

Then you'll be a good girl: and I'll give my love for you the reins without a pull-back.

Just then a servant came in with a card.

"Lady D.'s compliments to Mrs. Reeves and Miss Byron; and if it would be agreeable, she will wait on them presently, for one quarter of an hour. She is obliged to go out of town early in the morning."

What shall I do now? said I. I was in a flutter; not being fully recovered from that into which Sir Hargrave's visit had thrown me.

What now?—What now? said Miss Grandison. Ah! Harriet, we shall find you out by degrees.

By the way, Lucy, you are fond of plays; and it is come into my head, that, to avoid all *says-I's* and all *says-she's*, I will henceforth, in all dialogues, write names in the margin: so fancy, my dear, that you are reading in one of your favourite volumes.

Harriet. Do you know Lady D.?

Miss Gr. Very well: but I did not know that *you* did, Harriet.

Lady L. And I know she has a son: and I know she wants him to marry.

Harriet. That I may keep no secrets from my two sisters, my aunt Selby has written to me—

Miss Gr. Lately?

Harriet. Very lately.

Miss Gr. O! because you had not told me of that.

Mrs. Reeves. And pray, ladies, what is Lady D.'s character?

Lady L. She is a very sensible and prudent woman.

Miss Gr. I am not very intimate with her: but have seen her in two or three of my visits. I have always thought her so.—And pray, Harriet, don't you want to know what character my *lord* bears?

Harriet. My lord is nothing to me. I *have* answered. I have given my negative.

Miss Gr. The deuce you have!—Why, the man has a good 12,000l. a-year.

Harriet. I don't care.

Miss Gr. What a deuce ails the girl!

Then humorously telling on her fingers—ORME, *one;* FENWICK, *two;* GREVILLE, *three;* FOWLER, *four;*—I want another finger; but I'll take in my thumb—SIR HARGRAVE, *five;*—And now (putting the forefinger of one hand on the thumb of the other) LORD D. *six*!—And none of them the man!—Depend upon it, girl, pride will have a fall.

What could she mean by that?—Sir Charles Grandison's sisters, I hope, will not—But I believe she meant nothing.

Have I pride, Miss Grandison? coldly and gravely asked I, as my cousin observed to me afterwards.

Miss Gr. Have you pride?—Yes, that you have; or you have *worse.*

What could this mad lady mean by this?—And what could *I* mean? For I had tears in my eyes. I was very low-spirited at that moment.

Lady L. Well, but Miss Byron, shall we be impertinent, if we stay to see the lady?—I have a great value for her. She has been an admirable executrix and trustee for her son; and was as good a wife. I was just going; but, as she goes out of town to-morrow, will stay to pay my compliments to her. We can withdraw till you have had your talk.

Miss Gr. Does she come to persuade you, Harriet, to retract your refusal?

Harriet. I know not her business. I wrote my mind to my aunt Selby. But I believe my aunt could not have written, and the countess received what she wrote, by this time. But do not go: we can have no private talk.

Miss Gr. Well, but now I will tell you, without punishing your curiosity further, what Lord D.'s character is. He is as sober a man as most of the young nobility. His fortune is great. In sense he neither abounds, nor is wanting; and that class of men, take my word for it, are the best qualified of all others to make good husbands to women of superior talents. They know just enough to induce them to admire in *her*, what they have not in *themselves*. If a woman has prudence enough to give consequence to such a one before folks, and will behave as if she thought him her superior in understanding, she will be able to make her own will a law to him; by the way of *I will, Shall I?*—Or, *If you please*, my dear, *I will do—what I think fit*. But a fool and a wit are the extreme points, and equally unmanageable. And now tell me, Harriet, what can be your motive for refusing such a man as this?

Harriet. I wish, my dear, you would not talk to me of these men. I am sick of them all—Sir Hargrave has cured me—

Miss Gr. You fib, my dear—But did you ever see Lord D.?

Harriet. No, indeed!

Miss Gr. "No, indeed!"—Why then you are a simpleton, child. What, refuse a man, an earl too! in the bloom of his years, 12,000 good pounds a-year! yet never have seen him—Your motives, child! Your motives!—I wish you are not already—There she stopt.

Harriet. And I wish, Miss Grandison, with all my heart, if that would tame you, that you were in love over head and ears, and could not help it!

Miss Gr. And wish you me that for spite, or to please me?—I *am* in love, my dear; and nothing keeps me in countenance, but having company among the grave ones. Dearly do I love to find girls out. Why, I found out Lady L. before she would own a tittle of the matter. So prim!—"And *how can you think so,* Charlotte? *Who, I, in love!* No, indeed! No man has a place in *my* heart!"—Then I was resolved to have her secret out. I began with my *roundabouts,* and my *suppose's*—A *leer*—as thus—[I was both vexed and pleased with her archness] And then a *suppose*—Then came a blush—"Why, Charlotte, I cannot but *say,* that if I were *obliged* to have the one man or the other—" Then came a sigh, endeavoured in haste to be returned to the heart whence it came; and when it could not find its way back, to be cut into three-halves, as the Irishman said; that is, into two half-sighs, and a hem; and a "Get you gone, for an impertinent."—As much as to say, "You have it!"—And when I found I *had,* and she owned it; why then I put my mad head to her grave one; and we had but one heart betwixt us.

Lady L. (laughing)—Out of breath, Charlotte, I hope.

Miss Gr. Not yet—How often have I kept watch and ward for her! Sometimes have I lent her my dressing-room for their love-meetings: yet, for the *world,* she would not marry without her papa's consent: no, but like the rest of us, she would suffer her affections to be *engaged,* without letting him know a syllable of the matter.—Very true, Lady L. what signifies looking serious?

Lady L. Strange creature!

Miss Gr. Once or twice did I change dresses with her. In short, I was a perfect Abigail to her in the affair: and, let me tell you, two sisters, agreed to manage a love-affair, have advantages over even a lady and her woman.

Lady L. Mad creature!

Miss Gr. All this I did for her without fee or reward; only from the dear delight of promoting the good work, and upon the christian principle of Do as you would be done by.—Is not all this true, Lady L.? Deny it if you can.

Lady L. And have you *done*, Charlotte? Ah! my dear Miss Byron, you'll never do any-thing with this girl, except you hear all she has to say. And if you *have* a secret, 'tis better to let her know it at first. Charlotte is a generous girl, after all; but sometimes, as now, a very impertinent one—

What could these ladies mean by this, I wonder? If they suspect me to love somebody, surely this is not the way, that two such ladies, in *generosity*, should take; when they think I have no engagement; and know that the doubt must lie on their brother's side, whom, with all their *roundabouts*, as they call them, they cannot fathom.

I would give any thing, methinks, to know, if Sir Charles was ever in love.

Just then a rapping at the door made us suppose it was the countess. It was. After compliments to Mrs. Reeves and me, she embraced Lady L. very affectionately, and Miss Grandison kindly; asking the first after Lord L.'s health, and the other after her brother: He is the man of all men, Miss Grandison, said she, that I want to see. We shall be in town soon, for a month or two; and then you must make me known to one, whom every-body calls the best of men: as here, said she, coming up again to me, I have longed to be acquainted with one of the best of women.

Lady L. Miss Byron is, indeed, an excellent young woman. We do ourselves the honour of calling her *sister.*

Lady D. What an encouragement is that to be good? Even in this age, bad as it is, true merit will never want admirers. And let me say, that where beauty and goodness meet, as *here,* they adorn each other.

Agreeable Lady D.! thought I: my heart will not suggest a thought in favour of your *son;* but I shall easily be in love with *you.* The heart hardly deserves praise, my Lucy, that is not fond of it from the worthy.

Her ladyship took Lady L. aside; and said something to her. Lady L. answered with a No, as I suppose: to which Lady D. replied, I am glad of that; adding, I am not afraid of saying any thing to a person of Lady L.'s known prudence.

Ah! my Lucy! She asked Lady L. I dare say, whether the acknowledged sisterhood extended to the brother, as a brother, or as—something else—And, by her cheerful and condescending court to me afterwards, and to Mrs. Reeves, was satisfied by Lady L.'s answer, I make no doubt, that there is room for Lord D.'s address, for any-thing on Sir Charles's part.

I will not be mean, Lucy! Greatly as I admire somebody, these excellent sisters shall not find me *entangled in an hopeless passion.*

Her ladyship took my hand, and led me to the window. I was brought to town, said she, on an extraordinary occasion, two days ago; and must set out on my return in the morning. I thought I would not miss the opportunity of paying my compliments to a young lady, of whom I had heard every-body speak with great commendation. I make no doubt but your good aunt Selby has—There she stopt.

My aunt has sent me up two of your ladyship's letters, and copies of her answers.

I am pleased with your frankness, my dear. It was that part of your character that engaged me. Young women, in these cases, are generally either so affected, so starched (as if they thought there was something shameful in a treaty of this kind) or they are so awkward, that I have not patience with them. You have all the modesty—Indeed, my dear, your goodness of heart shines out in every feature of your face.

Your ladyship does me high honour.

I am pleased even with that acknowledgment. The discretion of a person is often most seen in minutenesses. Another would have made disqualifying speeches—But compliments made to the heart by one who is not accustomed to flatter; such compliments, I mean, as it would be culpable for a person not to be able to verify; should not be disclaimed. To say truth, my dear, I did not intend to mention one word of the matter to you, on this first visit. I only wanted to see you, and to converse with you a little, that I might make report accordingly to my son; who, however, knows not that I should pay my compliments to you: but the moment I saw you, your aspect confirmed all that I had heard said in your favour; and seeing you also so much caressed by two ladies of characters so established; and no less pleased with what I observed of Mr. and Mrs. Reeves [you are a family of good people]; I was resolved to be as frank as you are, and as your aunt Selby has been—She is a good woman—

Indeed, madam, she is—

Accordingly, I have singled you out, in the face of every-body present—You will have the discretion to caution them on this subject, till you have seen my son (I am sure there can be no doubt on his side)—

and till you know whether you shall approve of our proposals, or not: and, without hesitation, I bespeak your good opinion of *me* till then. I am sure, my dear Miss Byron, we shall be very happy in each other. If you and my lord are happy, you and I *must* be so—But, when the knot is tied, I will be only your visiter, and that at your own invitation. I am thought to be a managing woman: managing women are not generally the best to live with. You, I understand, are an excellent œconomist [A glorious character in this agefor a young woman!—Persons of the highest quality ought not to think themselves above it]. One person's method may differ from another's; yet both may be equally good, and reach the same end. My son has found the *benefit* of my œconomy: nevertheless, his wife shall not have cause to think, that, where she means well, I will prefer my methods to hers. If ever I give advice, it shall be only when you ask it: and then, if you do not take it, I will not be angry; but allow, that having weighed the matter well, you prefer your own judgment, on the best convictions. People who are to act for themselves, should be always left to judge for themselves; because they only are answerable for their own actions. You blush, my dear, I hope I don't oppress you. I would not oppress a modesty so happily blended with frankness.

I was affected with her goodness. What an amiable frankness! O that all husbands' mothers were like your ladyship! said I—What numbers of happy daughters-in-law would there then be, that now are not so!

Charming creature! said she. Proceed. I am glad I don't oppress you with my prate.

Oppress me, madam!—You delight me! Talk of a bad world!—*I* ought, I am sure, to think it a good

one!—In every matronly lady I have met with a *mother:* in many young ladies, as those before us, *sisters:* in their brother, a *protector:* if your ladyship has not heard on what occasion, I shall be ready to acquaint you with it.

Sweet child! Charming frankness! I have *seen*, I have *heard*, enough of you for my present purpose—We will return to company—Such company as I find you in, is not to be had at all times. I will restore you to them.

But, madam, declining her leading hand—

But what, my dear!

Have you not, madam?—But your ladyship could *not* have received any letter from my aunt Selby—I wrote—

I have *not*. I could not, as you say. But I shall find a letter from her, perhaps, on my return. You approve, I hope, of the proposal, if you shall have no objection to my son?

My aunt, madam, will let you know—

I will not have it otherwise than I wish it to be—Remember that I value you for the frankness you are praised for—A little female trifling to my *son*, if you will, in order to be assured of his value for you (and men love not all halcyon courtships) but none to *me*, my love. I'll assist you, and keep your counsel, in the first case, if it be necessary. He shall love you above all the women on earth, and convince you that he does, or he shall not call you his—But no female trifling to his mother, child! We women should always understand one another.

Because I would not be thought to be an insincere creature, a trifler, I think I ought to mention to your ladyship, that it would be a great, a very great part of my happiness, to be deemed worthy of your friendship—without—

Without what?—You do well perhaps to blush! Without what?

Without the relation—if you please.

I was confounded with her goodness, Lucy. Here, my dear, is another superior character—I fancy her maiden-name was Grandison.

But I *don't please.* So no more of this. Let us join company. And, taking my hand with the goodness of a real mother; yet her brow a little overclouded; she made apologies to them for taking me aside; and said, she could trust to their prudence, she was sure, as they must needs guess at her view; and therefore she offered not to put a limit to their conjectures; since denial or evasion would but, in this case, as it *generally* did, defeat its own end, and strengthen what it aimed to weaken.

Is there no obtaining such a mother, thought I, without marrying Lord D.?—And should I refuse to see him, if an interview is desired, especially when Lady L. has seemed to encourage the countess to think, somebody has no thoughts—Indeed I don't desire that that somebody should—If—I don't know what I was going to add to that *if:* but pray tell my grandmamma, that I hope her Harriet will never give her cause to lament her being *entangled in a hopeless passion.* No, indeed!

But, my Lucy, one silly question to *you,* who have been a little *entangled,* and more happily *disentangled:* I catch myself of late in saying *him* and *he,* and writing to you *somebody,* and such-like words, instead of saying and writing boldly, as I used to do, Sir Charles, and Sir Charles Grandison; which would sound more respectfully, and yet am sure I want not respect. What is the meaning of this?—Is it a sign—Ah! my Lucy! you said you would keep a sharp look-out; and did I not say I would upon myself? Surely I said truth: surely you will think so, when you see such little silly things as these do not escape me. But when you think me

too trifling, my dear, don't expose me. Don't read it out in the venerable circle. That to some may appear very weak and silly, which by others will be thought excusable, because natural. It would be wrong (as I yet never did it) to write separately to you. And what have I in my heart, were it to be laid open to all the world, that I should be—afraid —I was going to write, that I should be *ashamed* of? But I think I *am* a little ashamed, at times, for all that—Ah, Lucy! don't add, "And so I ought."

Lady D. repeated her desire of being acquainted with Sir Charles. She has no daughter: so it was purely for the sake of his great character. She heard, she said, that he was the politest of brothers. That was always a good sign with her. He gives you, Miss Grandison, I am told, a great deal of his company.

Miss Grandison said, that their brother, she believed, was one of the busiest men in the kingdom, who was not engaged in public affairs; and yet the most of a family-man. I endeavour, said she, to make home delightful to him. I never break in upon him when he is in his study, without leave: indeed I seldom ask it; for when he is inclined to give me his company, he requests, as a favour *from* me, what I am always ready to consider as one done *to* me. And I see he loves me: he is not uneasy in my company: he comes for half an hour, and stays an hour—But don't set me into talking of him; for my heart always dilates, when I enter into the agreeable subject, and I know not where to stop.

Lady L. Charlotte is a happy girl.

Miss Gr. And Lady L. is a happy woman; for he loves *her* as well as he loves *me*. Indeed he is so good as to say (but I know it is to keep us from pulling caps) that he knows not which he loves best: We have different qualities, he says; and he admires in each what the other has not.

Lady D. But what are his employments? What can he be so much busied in?

Miss Gr. A continual round of good offices. He has a ward. She has a large fortune. The attention he pays to her affairs takes up a good deal of his time. He is his own steward; and then he has a variety of other engagements, of which we ask him not one word; yet long to know something about them.—But this we are sure of, that if he thinks any-thing will give us pleasure, we shall hear of it: if the contrary, he is as secret as the night.

Will nobody say one bad or one indifferent thing of this man, Lucy! There is no bearingthese things! O my dear, what a nobody is your poor Harriet?

Lady D. He is one of the handsomest men in England, they tell me.

Miss Gr. Sisters are not judges. They may be partial. His benignity of heart makes his face shine. Had I a lover but half as handsome, as I think my brother, I should make no objection to him on the account of person.

Lady L. But he is the genteelest of men!—What think *you*, sister Harriet?

Harriet. " Sisters are not judges. They may be partial."

What meant Lady L. to apply to me? But I had been some time silent. She could not mean any-thing: and both sisters complimented me on recognizing the relation.

Lady D. asked me how long I should stay in town?

I said, I believed not long. I had leave for three months. Those would be soon elapsed: and as my friends were so good as to be pleased with my company, I should rather choose to walk within, than step out of my limits.

The countess, with a nod of approbation, said,

With good young people it will be always so: and this is more praise-worthy in Miss Byron, as she may do what she pleases.

Then, taking me a little aside—I hope, my dear, you meant nothing contrary to my wishes, when you referred, in so doubtful a manner, to what you had written to your aunt. You don't answer me! This is a call upon your frankness. Women, when any-thing is depending, on which they have set their hearts, are impatient.—Don't you know that?—They love not suspense.

It is painful to me, madam, to decline a proposal that would give me a relation to so excellent a lady—But—

But *what*, my dear?—Let not maidenly affectation step in with its cold water. You are above it. Woman to woman, daughter to mother—You are above it.

Then, turning to the ladies, and to my cousins—You don't know, any of you (we are by ourselves) that Miss Byron's heart is engaged? Miss Grandison, let me apply to you: maiden ladies open their hearts to one another. Know you whether Miss Byron has yet seen the man to whom she wishes to give her hand? Her aunt Selby writes to me, that she has not.

Miss Gr. We young women, madam, often know least of our own hearts. We are almost as unwilling to find out ourselves in certain cases, as to be found out by others. Speak, sister Harriet: answer for yourself.

[Was not this grievous, Lucy? And yet what ailed me, that I could not speak without hesitation! But this lady's condescending goodness—Yet this wicked Sir Hargrave! His attempt, his cruel treatment of me, has made me quite another creature than I was.]

My aunt Selby, madam, wrote the truth. To say I wish not to marry for some time to come, may sound like an affectation, because I have ever honoured the state—But something has happened that has put me out of conceit with myself, and with men too.

Lady D. With *all* men, child?—I will allow for a great many things in a *weak* mind, that I will not in *yours*. I have had a hint or two about an insult, or I know not what, from Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, since I came to town; for I have asked after you, my dear: but what is that but a confirmation of your merits? What a disagreeable woman must she be, whom but one man in the world could like?

But excuse me, Miss Byron, I have said abundance of impertinent things: I have gone further on this first visit than I intended. You must thank for this that ingenuous and open countenance, which confirms, at first sight, the character I had heard given by every-body who spoke of you. I shall see, perhaps, what your aunt Selby, to whom you refer, writes, when I get down. I shall soon be in town, as I said, for the rest of the winter; and then I will make myself mistress of your whole history from these ladies, and from yourself: and there shall end all my enquiries, and, I hope, all my solicitudes, on an article that is next my heart.—Mean time, adieu, my dear—Adieu.

She then, courtesying to all round, gave her hand to Mr. Reeves, who led her to her chair; leaving us all full of her praises.

Miss Gr. (looking archly) I say nothing as to her *particular* errand, because I would not be too curious; and because you ask *me* no questions, Harriet.

Lady L. This must do, Miss Byron: who would not wish for such a mother?

Harriet. Is the mother to be the principal inducement in such an article as this?

Miss Gr. Why, my dear, do you pretend, in such an age of petits-maitres, to live single, till you meet with a man who deserves you?—But, Harriet, you must voluntarily open your heart to me. I have a good deal of curiosity; and whenever you are disposed to gratify it, will not *withdraw* my attention.

Harriet. I will read to you this moment, if you please, ladies, as to my sisters, what Lady D. wrote to my aunt Selby; and what my aunt answered on the occasion.

Miss Gr. That's my best Harriet! I love to hear *how* and *every-thing about* these sort of matters.

Lady L. These girls, Mrs. Reeves, delight in love-subjects: there is a kind of enthusiasm in these matters that runs away with them.

Miss Gr. Say you so, Lady L.? And pray had *you* ever any of this enthusiasm? And if you had, did matrimony cure you of it?—See, Harriet! My sister has not been married many months; yet how *quietly* she now talks of the *enthusiasm* of love to us maidens!—Ah! my dear Lady L.! women, I see, have their free-masonry, as well as men! Don't you think so, Mrs. Reeves? A poor secret, after all, I believe, on both sides, whispered the lively lady; but loud enough for every-one to hear what she said.

Lady L. called her a mad girl. But let us be favoured, said she to me, with your communications.

I pulled out the letters. I read the two first paragraphs in my aunt's letter to me, entire; for they propose the matter, and nothing else.

What follows, said I, is full of love and care, and so forth: but here is one paragraph more I can read to you.

Miss Gr. As much reserve as you please, sister Harriet. I am learning how to deal with you.

Lady L. Why that, Charlotte? No fear that you will tell us more than you have a mind we should know. Regard not, therefore, this threatening, Miss Byron.

Harriet. To own the truth, I cannot read every-thing my aunt writes: but the Countess of D.'s proposal, and what relates to that, I will read, if you please.

Miss Gr. What you will—Read what you will. I find we are not at present so well acquainted, as we shall be hereafter.

What could Miss Grandison mean by that?

I read the last paragraph but one, in which my aunt proposes my coming down; and that I will either encourage the countess's proposal, or accept of Mr. Orme; ending with the earnest desire of my friends to have me married.

I then gave into Miss Grandison's hand the count-ess's first letter; and she read it out.

She gave it me back, and thanked me. Were all women, said she, capable of acting thus *frankly*, the sex would leave affectation to the men-monkeys. Remember, Harriet, that your openness of heart is one of the graces for which I principally admire you.

Lady L. O the rogue! Take care of her, Miss Byron! She tells you this, to get out of you all your secrets.

Miss Grandison may easily obtain her end, madam. She need only tell me, what she best likes I should be; and I must try to be that.

Miss Gr. Good girl! And take this along with you; that when you convince *me*, that you will not *hide*, I will convince *you*, that I will not *seek*. But what is next?

I then gave into her hand the copy of my aunt Selby's answer.

Miss Gr. May I read it all?

Harriet. If you please: the fondness of my aunt, and the partiality of—

Miss Gr. Away, away, Harriet!—No affectation, child!

She read it out. Both sisters praised the heart of the dear and thrice-indulgent writer! and called her *their* aunt Selby.

I then gave Miss Grandison the countess's second letter. They were no less pleased with that than with the first.

Miss Gr. But now your opinion of the proposal, child? Will you trust us with that? Have you a copy of what you wrote?

Harriet. I kept a copy only of what immediately respected the proposal; and that, because it was possible I might want to have recourse to it, as my aunt might, or might not, write farther about it.

I took it out of my pocket-book, and gave it to her to read.

Thank you, child, said she: I should have no curiosity, if I did not love you.

She read it out: it was the paragraph that begins with "You will, upon the strength of what I have said," &c.—ending with "*Such is my meaning.*"—Luckily, I had not transcribed the concluding sentence of that paragraph; having been ashamed of the odd words, *Hope of your hope.*

Lady L. But *why* should that be your *meaning*, my dear?

Harriet. I added, I remember, that I was pained by the teazings of these men, one after another; that I never took delight in their airy adulation; and was now the more pained, because of the vile attempt of Sir Hargrave, which had given me a surfeit of the sex.

Miss Gr. A temporary surfeit! It is over, I hope,

by this time. But my dear—And yet as I owe to your generosity the communication, I would not take occasion from it to teaze you—

Harriet. Miss Grandison will oblige me, say what she pleases.

Miss Gr. As you intend to marry—As your friends are very desirous that you *should*—As Lady D. is an excellent woman—As her son is, as men go, a tolerable man—As he is a peer of the realm; which is something in the scale, though it is not of weight, singly considered—As his estate is very considerable—As you may have your own terms—As you like not any one of your numerous admirers:—All these *As's* considered, why, why, in the name of goodness, should you give so flat a denial? Yet have not seen the gentleman, and therefore *can* have no dislikes either to his sense or person? I wish, my dear, you would give such a reason for your denial, a denial so *strongly* expressed, as one would imagine such a woman as the Countess of D. would be satisfied with, from such a one as Miss Byron.

Lady L. Perhaps, now that Miss Byron has seen what a lady the Countess of D. is—

Miss Gr. And now that she has overcome the *temporary surfeit*—

Lady L. She will change her mind.

[Are you not, my dear aunt Selby, are you not, my Lucy, distressed for me at this place? I was at the time greatly so for *myself*.]

Harriet. My mind has been disturbed by Sir Hargrave's violence; and by apprehensions of fatal mischiefs that might *too* probably have followed the generous protection given me: wonder not, therefore, ladies, if I am unable, on a sudden, to give such reasons for having refused to listen to Lady D.'s proposal, as you require; although, at the

same time, I find not in my heart the least inclination to encourage it.

Miss Gr. You *have* had your difficulties of late, my Harriet, to contend with: and those you must look upon as a tax to be paid by a merit so conspicuous. Even in this slighter case, as you love to oblige, I can pity you for the situation you are likely to be in, betwixt the refused son and the deserving mother. But when you consider, that the plagues of the discreet proceed from other people, those of the indiscreet from themselves, you will sit down with a just compliment to yourself, and be content. You see I can be grave now-and-then, child.

Harriet. May I *deserve* to be called prudent and discreet! On that condition, I am willing to incur the penalty.

Lady L. Come, come; that is out of the question, my dear: so you are contented of course, or in the way to be so.

The ladies took their leave, and seemed pleased with their visit.

It is now, my dear friends, some-how or other, become necessary, I think, to let you minutely into my situation, that you may advise, caution, instruct me—For, I protest, I am in a sort of wilderness.—Pray, my Lucy, tell me—But it cannot be from *love:* so I don't care—Yet to lie under such a weight of obligation; and to find myself so much surpassed by these ladies—Yet it is not from *envy*, surely: that is a very bad passion. I hope my bosom has not a place in it for such a mean self-tormentor. Can it be from *pride?* Pride is a vice that always produces mortification: and proud you all made me of your favour—Yet I thought it was grateful to be proud of it.

[I wish I were with you, Lucy. I should ask you abundance of questions; and repose my anxious heart on your faithful bosom; and, at the same time, from your answers, arm it against too great a sensibility, before it is too late.

But, pray, don't I remember, that you said, you found sighing a relief to you, on a certain occasion? —I am serious, my dear. That there was a sort of you-knew-not-what of *pleasure* in sighing? Yet that it was involuntary?—Did you not say, that you were ready to quarrel with yourself, you knew not why? —And, pray, had you not a fretting, gnawing pain in your stomach, that made you I can't tell how to describe it; yet were humble, meek, as if looking out for pity from every-body, and ready to pity every-body?—Were you not attentive to stories of people, young women especially, labouring under doubts and difficulties?—Was not your humanity raised? your self-consequence lowered? But did you not think *suspense* the greatest of all torments?—I think, my dear, you lived without eating or drinking; yet looked not pining, but fresh.—Your rest—I remember it was broken. In your sleep you seemed to be disturbed. You were continually rolling down mountains, or tumbling from precipices—or were borne down by tempests, carried away with sudden inundations; or sinking in deep waters; or flying from fires, thieves, robbers—

How apt are we to recollect, or to *try* to recollect, when we are apprehensive that a case may possibly be our own, all those circumstances, of which, while another's (however dear that other might be to us) we had not any clear or adequate ideas!—But I know, that such of these as I recollect not from *you*, must be owing to the danger, to the terror, I was in from the violence of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen. Often and often do I dream over again what I

suffered from him. I am now imploring mercy from him; and meet with nothing but upbraidings and menaces. He is now stopping my mouth with his handkerchief: his horrible clergyman, if a clergyman he was, is reading the service quite through: and I am contending against the legality of the asserted marriage. At other times, I have escaped; and he is pursuing me: he gains upon my flying feet; and I wake myself with endeavouring in vain to cry out for help.

But when fancy is more propitious to me, then comes my rescuer, my deliverer: and he is sometimes a mighty prince (dreams then make me a perfect romancer) and I am a damsel in distress. The milk-white palfrey once came in. All the marvellous takes place; and lions and tygers are slain, and armies routed, by the puissance of his single arm.

Now, do not these reveries convince you, that I owe all my uneasiness to what I suffered from Sir Hargrave's barbarity? I think I must take my aunt's advice; leave London; and then I shall better find out, whether, as all my friends suspect, and as, to be ingenuous, I myself now begin sometimes to fear, a passion stronger than gratitude has not taken hold of my heart. Of this I am sure; my reasoning faculties are weakened. Miss Grandison says, that, in my illness at Colnebrook, I was delirious; and that the doctor they called in was afraid of my head: and should I suffer myself to be *entangled in a hopeless passion*, there will want no further proof, that my reason has suffered.]

Adieu, my Lucy! What a letter have I written! The conclusion of it, I doubt, will of itself be a sufficient evidence of the weakness I have mentioned, both of head and heart, of your

HARRIET.

On perusal of the latter part of this letter [which I have inclosed in hooks] if you can avoid it, Lucy, read it not before my uncle.

LETTER VI.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS LUCY SELBY.

Saturday, March 4.

THIS morning Sir Hargrave Pollexfen made Mr. Reeves a visit. He said it was to him; but I was unluckily below; and forced to hear all he had to say, or to appear unpolite.

He proposed visiting my grandmamma and aunt Selby, in order to implore their forgiveness. But Mr. Reeves diverted him from thinking of that.

He had not sought me, he said, at Lady Betty Williams's, but from his desire (on the character he had heard of me) to pay his addresses to me, in preference to every other woman. He had laid out for several opportunities to get into my company, before he heard I was to dine there. Particularly he once had resolved to pay a visit in form to my uncle Selby, in Northamptonshire, and had got all his equipage in readiness to set out; but heard that I was come to town with Mr. and Mrs. Reeves. He actually then set out, he said, for Peterborough, with intent to propose the affair to my godfather Deane: but found that he was gone to Cambridge: and then, being resolved to try his fate with me, he came to town; and hardly questioned succeeding, when he understood that my friends left me to my own choice; and knowing that he could offer such proposals, as none of the gentlemen who had made pretensions to me, were able to make. His inten-

tions therefore were not sudden, and such as arose upon what he saw of me at Lady Betty Williams's; though the part I supported in the conversation there, precipitated his declaration.

He was very unhappy, he said, to have so mortally disobliged me; and repeated all his former pleas; his love [rough love, I am sure] compassion, sufferings, and I cannot tell what; insisting, that he had forgiven much greater injuries, as was but *too* apparent.

I told him, that I had suffered more than he could have done, though his hurt was more visible than mine: that nevertheless I forgave him; as no bad consequences had followed between him and my protector—[Protector! muttered he]—But that he knew my mind, before he made that barbarous attempt; and I besought him never more to think of me; and he must excuse me to say, that this must be the very last time I ever would see him.

A great deal was said on both sides; my cousins remaining attentively silent all the time: and at last he insisted, that I would declare, that I never would be the wife either of Mr. Greville or Mr. Fenwick: assuring me, that the rash step he had taken to make me his, was owing principally to his apprehension, that Mr. Greville was more likely to succeed with me than any other man.

I owed him, I told him, no such declaration. But Mr. Reeves, to get rid of his importunity, gave it as his opinion, that there was no ground for his apprehensions that I would give my hand to either; and I did not contradict him.

Mr. Bagenhall and Mr. Jordan, before I could get away from this importunate man, came to enquire for him. He then owned, that they came in hope of seeing me; and besought me to favour him and them for one quarter of an hour only.

I was resolved to withdraw: but, at Sir Hargrave's command, as impertinently given as officiously obeyed, Mr. Reeves's servant shewed them (his master indeed not contradicting) into the parlour where we were.

The two strangers behaved with great respect. Never did men run praises higher, than both these gentlemen gave to Sir Charles Grandison. And indeed the subject made me easier in their company than I should otherwise have been.

It is not possible, I believe, for the vainest mind to hear itself profusely praised, without some pain: but it is surely one of the sweetest pleasures in the world, to hear a whole company join in applauding the absent person who stands high in our opinion; and especially if he be one to whose unexceptionable goodness we *owe*, and are not ashamed to *own*, obligation.

What further pleased me, was to hear Mr. Bagenhall declare, which he did in a very serious manner, that Sir Charles Grandison's *great* behaviour, as he justly called it, had made such impressions not only upon him, but upon Mr. Merceda, that they were both determined *to turn over a new leaf*, was his phrase; and to live very different lives from what they *had* lived; though they were far, they blessed God, from being before the worst of men.

These gentlemen, with Mr. Merceda and Sir Hargrave, are to dine with Sir Charles to-day. They both mentioned it with great pleasure: but Sir Hargrave did not seem so well pleased, and doubted of his being able to persuade himself to go. The invitation was given at Mr. Jordan's motion, who took hold of a slight invitation of Sir Charles's; Mr. Jordan declaring, that he was resolved not to let slip any opportunity of improving an acquaintance with so extraordinary a man.

Sir Hargrave talked of soon leaving the town, and retiring to one of his country-seats; or of going abroad, for a year or two, if he must have no hopes—Hopes! a wretch!—

Yet he shewed so much dejection, and is so really mortified with the damage done to a face that he used to take pleasure to see reflected in the glass (never once looking into either of those in the parlour he was in, all the time he staid) that I could once or twice have been concerned for him: but when I seriously reflect, I do not know whether his mortification is not the happiest thing that could have befallen him. It wants only to be attended with patience.—He is not *now* an ugly man in his person. His estate will always give him consequence. He will now think the better of others; and the worse of himself: he *may, much* worse; and not want as much vanity as comes to his share.

But say you, my uncle (as I fancy you do) that I also may spare some of *my* vanity, and not be the worse girl?—Ah! no! I am now very sensible of my own defects. I am poor, low, silly, weak—Was I ever insolent? Was I ever saucy? Was I ever—O my uncle, hide my faults. I am mortified. Let me not reproach myself with having *deserved* mortification. If I did, I knew it not. I intended not to be saucy, vain, insolent—And if I was so, lay it to a flow of health, and good spirits; to time of life; young, gay, and priding myself in every one's love; yet most in the love, in the fond indulgence, of all you my good friends: and then you will have some of my faults to lay at your own doors; nor will you, even *you*, my uncle, be clear of reproach, because your correction was always mingled with so much praise, that I thought you were but at play with your niece, and that you levelled your blame more at the sex than at your Harriet.

But what have I written against myself! I believe I am *not* such a low, silly, weak creature, as I had thought myself. For just as I had laid down my pen with a pensive air, and to look into the state of my own heart, in order either to lighten, or to confirm, the self-blame I had so glibly written down, Lady L. in her chair, made us a visit. She came up directly to me: I am come to dine with your cousins and you, Miss Byron, said she. Shall I be welcome? But don't answer me. I know I shall.

Mrs. Reeves entered; and acknowledged the favour.

Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, and some of his brethren, are to dine with my brother, said my lady; and I, not being obliged to do the honours of the table, with my lord's consent, made my escape. I cannot endure the wretch who could make such a vile attempt upon you, and who might have murdered my brother.—Come, will you let me see what you are writing? You can forgive *Charlotte's* freedom: will you excuse her *sister's?*

I cannot shew your ladyship *all* I have written; but I will read you some passages of the long letter before me.

I told her my subject, and read to her such as I thought I *could* read. She raved at Sir Hargrave: wondered he had the confidence to approach me, especially with hope. She praised me: yet said to my cousin Reeves, that he ought to have been denied the house; and the rather, as I was myself very unwilling to see him.

I own, I thought so too. Both my cousins are *too* good-natured.

We had a great deal of talk about the duel that was so happily prevented. Lady L. gave us an account of that which her father fought; and to the issue of

which they owed the loss of the best of mothers: and at and after dinner she piously expatiated on the excellencies of that mother; and demonstrated, what I have often thought of great consequence (my grandmamma's and aunt Selby's examples before me affording the noblest proofs) that the conduct of women in their families is of high importance; and that they need not to look out of them so often as they do, to employ themselves; and that not only in the most useful, but in the most delightful manner.

My Lord L. having broke from the company at Sir Charles's, did us the honour to drink tea with us. Every-thing, he said, passed very agreeably among the gentlemen he had left; and it was his opinion, that his brother's noble behaviour, and the conversation that passed at table, and in which he left him and them engaged, would make more than one convert among them.

He told Lady L. that Sir Charles was to set out on Monday for Canterbury [for Canterbury, Lucy!]; and that he hoped she would give him her company for a few days to Colnebrook. Their new house, he said, would be ready to receive them in a week's time: it wanted nothing but a thorough airing. And if, said he, you could prevail upon Miss Grandison to be with us till her brother returns, and both sisters could induce Miss Byron to make a fourth, we shall be the happiest party in the world; and perhaps may get Sir Charles among us, on his return, for a day or two. I bowed.

I must tell you, my lord, that Charlotte and I thought to offer our attendance on Miss Byron to some of the public entertainments: but your lordship's pleasure shall determine me; and if we could be so happy as to have Miss Byron for our guest, I am sure of my sister; and it would be my preferable

wish. Mr. Reeves, Mrs. Reeves, will you spare Miss Byron to me?

I looked, as if for their leave. They gave a smiling assent.

My lord and lady both expressed themselves overjoyed.

This Canterbury ran in my head. It was brought in naturally enough; and Mr. Reeves wondered, that Sir Charles kept secret the motive of his journeying thither backward and forward. *The godlike man*, said Mr. Reeves, in the words of a great poet, *has nothing to conceal.* For my part, replied my lord, I conclude the motive is rather a painful than a pleasurable one. Charlotte accuses her brother of reserves. I never found him reserved: but he loves to play with her curiosity, and amuse her: for she is very curious, yet has *her* secret.—Has she not, Lady L.?

Indeed she has, replied my lady—Perhaps you, my dear, will be entrusted with it, when you are at Colnebrook together.

Pray, madam, said I to Lady L. may I ask?—Does Sir Charles give Lord G. his interest in his addresses to Miss Grandison?

Lady L. My brother wishes Charlotte married. He is a great friend to the married state; especially with regard to our sex.

Mr. Reeves could not miss this opportunity. It is a wonder, said he, that Sir Charles himself does not think of marriage?

Lady L. That is a string that we but just touch sometimes, and away. There is a lady—

There she stopt. Had she looked with earnestness at me, I had been undone, I believe.

☞ Let me ask you, Lucy: you have passed the fiery ordeal—Did you ever find in yourself a kind of impatience, next to petulance; and in your

heart (only for fear of exposing yourself) that you were ready to quarrel, or to be short, with any body that came upon you on a sudden; yet have no business of consequence to engage either your fingers or your thoughts?—Of late, my dear, I have been very often troubled with this odd sensation. But my whole temper is altering, I believe. I shall grow peevish, perverse, and gloomy, I doubt. O this wicked Sir Hargrave! ☞]

Pray, my dear, attend for the future to those indexes or hands; and forbear to read out the passages inclosed by them, if you can—But if you come upon them before you are aware, why then read on—with all my heart.

But to return to Lady L.'s alarming hint—"There *is* a lady"—

Mrs. Reeves. That Sir Charles loves, I suppose?

Lady L. That loves Sir Charles; and she has—But for the lady's sake—Yet, if it be allowable for any woman to be in love with any man, upon an uncertainty of return, it is for one that is in love with my brother.

Harriet. And cannot Sir Charles make a return?—Poor lady!

My cousin afterwards told me, that my upper-lip then quivered like an aspin-leaf. I did not know that it did. I felt not a trembling at my heart; and when the lip trembles, the heart, I think, should be affected. There used to be a close connexion between mine.

Mr. Reeves. Miss Grandison told *me*, that, if her brother married, half a score women would break their hearts.

Lady L. The words *half a score* run as glibly off the tongue as *half a dozen*: but I believe, let the envious, the censorious, malign our sex, and charge us with the love of rakes and libertines, as they will,

if all men were like my brother, there would not be a single woman, and hardly a bad one, in the kingdom. What say you, my lord?

Lord L. My dear life, you know I am all attention, whenever you, or my sister Charlotte, make our brother the subject of your panegyric. If, Miss Byron, you do not choose to hear so much said of this best of men, you will, I doubt, have an ill time of it in the favour you will do us at Colnebrook.

Harriet. My lord, I should be very ungrateful, if I did not hear with pleasure every-thing that shall be said in praise of Sir Charles Grandison.

Lord L. When I am out of conceit with men, as too often they give me cause to be, I think of my brother, and forgive them.

I wonder, Lucy, what every-body *means* by praising Sir Charles Grandison so much in my hearing! —Shall I fly from town, to avoid hearing his praises! —Yes, say you?—But whither? It must not be to Selby-house. Well then, I may as well go to Colnebrook. I shall there be informed of the reasons for all those general applauses; for hitherto I know nothing of his history, to what they tell me I am to know.

These general praises carried us away from a subject that I thought we should once have made more of—*That one lady*—And I wanted to know, but had no opportunity to inform myself, whether that lady's relations, or herself, live at Canterbury. On Monday, it seems, Sir Charles sets out for *that* Canterbury.

Our noble guests would not stay supper. They had not been gone two hours before I had an humorous letter from Miss Grandison. I inclose it.

Saturday night, ten o'clock.

Lord and Lady L. rejoice me by telling me, you will accompany them to Colnebrook on Monday.—

That's my good girl!—I will go with them for the sake of your company. Yet I had half-denied them: And why? Because, if you must know—But hush—and catch a mouse—Because, a certain impertinent proposes a visit there; and I had thoughts to take the opportunity of being alone in town, to rid my hands for ever, if possible, of another silly fellow, of whom, for one *month*, a great while ago, I thought tolerably.

You and I, Harriet, will open to each other all our hearts. There is one chamber that has two beds in it. We will have that. Our dressing-room shall be common to both. Lady L. is a *morning-killer*: she always loved her bed: so we shall have charming opportunities for tête-à-tête conversation.

I will drink tea with you to-morrow—No, but I won't: you and your cousin shall drink tea with us—Do you hear? I won't be denied. And then we'll settle how it shall be. I'll tell you what, my dear—If, on my brother's return from Canterbury, he comes to us at Colnebrook, we will call him to account for all his reserves. Here is this affair of Pollexfen's: how might it have ended! I tremble to think of it—You'll stand by me: won't you? I cannot make Lord and Lady L. of my party, or I would have rebelled before now—But you and I, my dear, I warrant you—Yet you are so grave. Were you always such a grave, such a wise, such a *very* wise girl, Harriet? Was your grandfather a very sententious man? Was his name *Solomon* Shirley?

I love wisdom as well as any-body: but wisdom, out of its place, is a prude, my dear. How I ramble!—You'll come to-morrow—I designed but two lines. Adieu. Believe me

Ever yours,

C. G.

I hope, Lucy, I was not wrong in so readily consenting to go to Colnebrook. My own inclination, indeed, was in my compliance; and I begin to mistrust myself, wherever that strongly leads. Yet why should I undervalue myself? I know my heart to be good. In that I will not yield to any-body. I have no littleness in my mind: *naturally* I have not. Guard me, O my friends! by your prayers, that no littleness, that is *not* natural to my heart, may debase it, and make me unworthy of the love you have ever shewn to your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER VII.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS LUCY SELBY.

Sunday, March 5.

My cousins will have it, that I am far gone in a certain passion [*they* speak quite out] and with a man that has given no encouragement—Encouragement! how meanly sounds that word! But I hope they are mistaken. I cannot say, but I might prefer, if I were to have my choice—one man to another—But that is a different thing from being run away with by so *vehement* a folly as they are ready to ascribe to me.

Well, but, under this notion, they are solicitous that I should not neglect any opportunity [What a poor creature do they think me!] of *ingratiating* myself with the sisters: and therefore I must, by all means, accept of Miss Grandison's invitation to tea.

I insisted, however, that they should accompany me, as they likewise were invited: and they obliged

me—I may say *themselves* too; for they admire the brother and sisters as much as I do.

We found together Lord and Lady L. Miss Grandison, Miss Jervois, Dr. Bartlett, and Mr. Grandison. Sir Charles was in his drawing-room adjoining to the study: a lady with him, they said. What business had I to wish to know whether it was an elderly or young lady? But I must tell you all my follies. When we alighted, a very genteel chair made way for our coach.

Mr. Grandison made up to me; and, as heretofore, said very silly things, but with an air, as if he were accustomed to say such, and to have them received as gallant things, by those to whom he addressed them. How painful is it to a mind not quite at ease, to be obliged to be civil, when the ear is invaded by contemptible speeches, from a man who must think as highly of himself for uttering them, as meanly of the understanding of the person he is speaking to!

Miss Grandison saw me a little uneasy, and came up to us. Mr. Grandison, said she, I thought you had known Miss Byron's character by this time. She is something more than a pretty woman. She has a *soul*, Sir: the man who makes a compliment to her on her beauty, depreciates her understanding.

She then led me to her seat, and sat down next me.

Mr. Grandison was in the midst of a fine speech, and was not well pleased. He sat down, threw one leg over the knee of the other, hemmed three or four times, took out his snuff-box, tapped it, let the snuff drop through his fingers, then broke the lumps, then shut it, and twirled it round with the fore-finger of his right-hand, as he held it between the thumb and fore-finger of the other; and was quite like a sullen boy: yet, after a while, tried to recover himself, by forcing a laugh at a slight thing or two said in company, that was not intended to raise one.

I think, my dear, I could have allowed a little more for him, had not his name been Grandison.

We soon adjusted every-thing for the little journey. Mr. Grandison told Miss Grandison, that if she would make him amends for her treatment of him just now, she should put Lord L. upon inviting *him*. Lord and Lady L. joined to do so. But Miss Grandison would not admit of his going; and I was glad of it.

But, not to affront you, cousin, said she, Miss Byron and I want to have a good deal of particular conversation: so shall not be able to spare *you* an hour of our company at Colnebrook. But one thing, Sir: my brother sets out for Canterbury to-morrow: tell him, that *we* won't be troubled with your company: ask him, if *he* will?

Not in those words neither, cousin Charlotte: but I will offer my attendance; and if he accepts of it, I shall be half as happy as if I went to Colnebrook; and *only* half, bowing to me.

Why, now, you are a good docible kind of man! I want to hear what will be my brother's answer: for we know not one syllable, nor can guess at his business at Canterbury.

The tea-equipage being brought in, we heard Sir Charles's voice, complimenting a lady to her chair; and who pleaded engagement for declining to drink tea with his sister. And then he entered the parlour to us. He addressed my cousins, who were next him, with his usual politeness. He then came to me: How does my good Miss Byron? Not discomposed, I hope, by your yesterday's visiters. They are all of them in love with you. But you must have been pained—I was pained for you, when I heard they had visited you. But extraordinary merit has some forfeitures to pay.

I am sure then, thought I, you must have a great

many. Every time I see him, I think he rises upon me in the gracefulness of his behaviour.

I have one agreeable piece of news to tell you, madam. Sir Hargrave will go abroad for a twelvemonth. He says, he cannot be in the same kingdom with you, and not see you. He hopes therefore to lessen the torment, by flying from the temptation. Mr. Bagenhall and Mr. Merceda will go with him.

Then whispering me, he said, From a hint in the letter of the penitent Wilson, that Mr. Bagenhall's circumstances are not happy, and that he is too much in the power of Sir Hargrave; I have prevailed on the latter, in consideration of the other's accompanying him abroad, to make him easy. And, would you believe it? and can you forgive me?—I have brought Sir Hargrave to consent to give Wilson the promised 100l. To induce him to do this, Merceda (influenced by the arguments I urged, founded on the unhappy's fellow's confessions in that letter) offered 50l. more for his past services to himself: and both, as a proof of the sincerity of their promised reformation. Wilson shall not have the money, but upon his marrying the girl to whom he is contracted: and on my return from a little excursion I am making to Canterbury, I shall put all in a train. And now, let me ask you, once more, Can you forgive me for *rewarding*, as you may think it, a base servant?

O Sir! how can I answer you?—You told me at Colnebrook, that we were to endeavour to bring good out of the evil from which you had delivered me. This indeed is making your words true in a very extensive sense: to make your enemies your friends; to put wicked men into a way of reformation; and to make it a bad man's interest to be good—*Forgive* you, Sir!—From what I remember of that poor wretch's letter, I was obliged to him myself:

though vile, he was less vile than he might have been. The young woman behaved with tenderness to me at Paddington: let me therefore add 50l. to Mr. Merceda's 50l. as an earnest that I can follow a noble example.

You charm me, madam, said he. I am not disappointed in my opinion of you—Wilson, if he give hope of real penitence, shall not want the fourth 50l.—It would be *too good* in you, so great a sufferer as you were by his wickedness, to give it: but it will become a man to do it, who has not been injured by him, and who was the occasion of his losing the favour of his employer; and the rather as he was an adviser to his fellow agents to fly, and not to fire at my servants, who might have suffered from a *sturdier* villain. He has promised repentance and reformation: this small sum will give me a kind of right to enforce the performance.—But no more of this just now.

Miss Jervois just then looking as if she would be glad to speak with her guardian, he arose, and taking her hand, led her to the window. She was in a supplicating attitude, as if asking a favour. He seemed to be all kindness and affection to her.—Happy girl!—Miss Grandison, who had heard enough of what he said of Wilson, to be affected, whispered me, Did I not tell you, Harriet, that my brother was continually employed in doing good? He has invention, forecast, and contrivance. But you see how those qualities are all employed.

O Miss Grandison, said I, I am such a nothing!—I cannot, as Sir Hargrave says, bear my own littleness.

Be quiet, said she—You are an exceeding good girl! But you have a monstrous deal of pride. Early I saw that. You are not half so good as the famous Greek, who losing an election for which he stood, to

be one of 300 only, thanked the gods, that there were in Athens (I think it was) 300 better men than himself. Will you not have honour enough, if it can be said, that, *next* to Sir Charles Grandison, you are the best creature in the world?

Sir Charles led his ward to a seat, and sat down by us.

Cousin Charlotte, said Mr. Grandison, you remember your treatment of me, for addressing Miss Byron in an open, and I thought, a very polite manner: pray where's *your* impartiality? Sir Charles has been shut up in his study with a lady who would not be seen by any-body else.—But Sir Charles may do any-thing.

I am afraid it is too late, cousin, said Miss Grandison: else it would be worth your while to try for a reputation.

Has Charlotte, Mr. Grandison, said Sir Charles, used you ill? Ladies will do as they please with you gallant men. They look upon you as their own; and you wish them to do so. You must bear the inconvenience for the sake of the convenience.

Well, but, Sir Charles, I am refused to be of the Colnebrook party—Absolutely refused. Will *you* accept of my company? Shall I attend you to Canterbury?

Are you in earnest, cousin Grandison? Will you oblige me with your company?

With all my heart and soul, Sir Charles.

With all mine, I accept your kind offer.

This agreeably surprised his sisters as well as me: but why then so secret, so reserved, to them?

Mr. Grandison immediately went out to give orders to his servant for the journey.

A good-natured man! said Sir Charles.—Charlotte, you are sometimes too quick upon him—Are you not?

Too quick upon him!—No, no! I have hopes of him; for he can be ashamed: that was not always the case with him. Between your gentleness and my quickness, we shall make something of him in time.

Mr. Grandison immediately returned; and we lost something that Sir Charles was going to reply. But, by some words he dropt, the purport was to blame his sister for not sparing Mr. Grandison before company.

I imagine, Sir Charles, that if you take Mr. Grandison with you, one may venture to ask a question, Whether you go to any family at Canterbury, that we have heard of?—It is to do good, I am sure.

Your eyes have asked me that question several times, Charlotte. I aim not at making secrets of any-thing I do. I need not on this occasion. Yet you, Charlotte, have your secrets.

He looked grave.

Have I my secrets, Sir Charles?—Pray what do you mean?

She coloured, and seemed sensibly touched.

Too much emotion, Charlotte, is a kind of confession. Take care. Then turning it off with a smile—See, Mr. Grandison, I am revenging your cause. Alarming spirits love not to be alarmed.

So, Harriet! (whispering to me) I am silenced. Had I told you all my heart, I should half have suspected you. How he has fluttered me!—Lady L. this is owing to you, whispering her behind my chair.

I know nothing; therefore could tell nothing. Conscience, conscience! Charlotte, re-whispered Lady L.

She sat still, and was silent for a little while; Lord and Lady L. smiling, and seeming to enjoy her agreeable confusion. At last—But, Sir Charles, you *always* had secrets. You got out of me two or three of mine without exchange.—You—

Don't be uneasy, my Charlotte. I expected a

prompt, not a *deliberate* reply. My life is a various life. Some things I had better not have known myself. See, Charlotte, if you are serious, you will make me so. I have not any motives of action, I hope, that are either capricious or conceited [Surely, Lucy, he cannot have seen what I wrote to you about his reserves! I thought he looked at me]—Only this one hint, my sister: whenever you condescend to consult me, let me have every-thing before me, that shall be necessary to enable me to form a judgment—But why so grave, Charlotte? Impute all I have said, as a revenge of Mr. Grandison's cause, in gratitude for his obliging offer of accompanying me to Canterbury.

Cannot you reward *him*, Sir Charles, but by punishing *me*?

A good question, Charlotte. But do you take what I have said in that light?

I have done for the present, Sir: but I hope, when you return, we shall come to an eclaircissement.

Needs it one?—Will not better and more interesting subjects have taken place by that time?—And he looked at her with an eye of particular meaning.

Now is he beginning to wind about me, whispered she to me, as I told you at Colnebrook. Were he and I alone, he'd have me before I knew where I was. Had he been a wicked man, he would have been a *very* wicked one.

She was visibly uneasy: but was afraid to say any more on the subject.

Lady L. whispered—Ah! Charlotte, you are taken in your own toils. You had better let me into your secret. I would bring you off, if I could.

Be quiet, Lady L.

We then talked of the time in the morning of our setting out for Colnebrook. I thought I read Miss Emily's mind in her eyes—Shall we not have the

pleasure of Miss Jervois's company? said I, to the sisters.

Emily bowed to me, and smiled.

The very thing that Miss Jervois was petitioning to me for, said Sir Charles: and I wished, ladies, to have the motion come from one of you.

Emily shall go with us, I think, said Miss Grandison.

Thank you, madam, said she: I will take care not to break in upon you impertinently.

What! dost *thou* too think we have secrets, child?

Consent with your usual grace, Charlotte: are you not too easily affected? Sir Charles spoke this smiling.

Every thing you say, Sir Charles, affects me.

I ought then to be very careful of what I say. If I have given my sister pain, I beg her to forgive me.

I am afraid to go on, whispered she to me. Were he and I only together, my heart would be in his hand in a moment.

I have only this to observe, Miss Grandison, whispered I—When you are too hard upon me, I know to whom to apply, for revenge.

Such another word, Harriet, and I'll blow you up!

What could she mean by that?—*Blow me up!* I have locked up my aunt's last letters, where so much is said about *entangling* and *inclination*, and so-forth. When any-thing occurs, that we care not to own, I see by Miss Grandison, that it is easy for the slightest hint to alarm us.

But Sir Charles to say so seriously as he did, "That his life was a various life;" and that "he had better not have known some things himself," affects me not a little. What can a man of his prudence have had to disturb him? But my favourite author says,

> Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant,
> In this our *day of proof*, our *land of hope*,
> The good man has his clouds that intervene,

Clouds that *obscure* his sublunary day;
But never conquer. Ev'n the best must own,
Patience and *resignation* are the pillars
Of human peace on earth.—— NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

But so young a man! so prudent! as I said; and so generally beloved! But that he is so, may be the occasion.—Some lady, I doubt!—What sad people are we women at this rate! Yet some women may have the worst of it. What are your thoughts on all these appearances, Lucy?

Miss Grandison, as I said, is uneasy. These are the words that disturb her: "Only this one hint, my sister: whenever you condescend to consult me, let me have every-thing before me, that shall be necessary to enable me to form a judgment."—And so they would *me* in her case.

But it seems plain from Sir Charles's hint, that he keeps to himself (as Miss Grandison once indeed said in his favour) those intelligences which would disturb her and his other friends, to know. The secret which he would have made of the wicked challenge; his self-invited breakfasting with Sir Hargrave; are proofs, among others, of this: and if this be his considerate motive, what a forward, what a censorious creature have I been, on so many occasions, to blame him for his reserves, and particularly for his Canterbury excursions! I think I will be cautious for the future, how I take upon me to censure those actions, which in such a man I cannot account for.

Miss Grandison, on her brother's withdrawing with Dr. Bartlett, said, Well, now that my cousin Grandison will accompany my brother to Canterbury, we shall have that secret out in course.

Lady L. It seems to be your fault, Charlotte, that we have not had it before.

Miss Gr. Be quiet, Lady L.

Mr. Gr. Perhaps not. You'll find I can keep a secret, cousin; especially if I am desired to do so.

Miss Gr. I shall wonder at that.

Mr. Gr. Why so?

Miss Gr. Shall I give it you in plain English?

Mr. Gr. You don't use to mince it.

Miss Gr. It would be strange, cousin, if a man should make a secret of an innocent piece of intelligence, who has told stories of himself, and gloried in them, that he ought, if true, to have been hanged for.—You *would* have it.

Mr. G. I knew I must have the plain English, whether I *asked* for it or not. But give me leave to say, cousin Charlotte, that you made not so superior a figure just now.

Miss Gr. True, Mr. Grandison. There is but one man in the world, of whom I stand in awe.

Mr. Gr. I believe it; and hope you never design to marry, for *that* reason.

Miss Gr. What a wretch is my cousin! Must a woman stand in awe of her husband? Whether, Sir, is marriage a state of servitude or of freedom to a woman?

Mr. Gr. Of freedom, as women generally make it —Of servitude, if they know their duty.—Pardon me, ladies.

Miss Gr. Don't pardon him. I suppose, Sir, it is owing to your consciousness, that you have only the *will*, and not the *spirit*, to awe a woman of sense, that you are a single man at this day.

Lady L. Pray, my lord, what have I done, that you treat me with so much contempt?

Lord L. *Contempt!* my best life—How is that?

Lady L. You seem not to think it worth your while to *over-awe* me.

Miss Gr. Lord, my dear! how you are mistaken in applying thus to Lord L.! Lord L. is a good man,

a virtuous man: none but rakes hold these *over-awing* doctrines. They know what they deserve; and live in continual fear of meeting with their deserts; and so, if they marry, having the hearts of slaves, they become tyrants. Miss Byron—

Mr. Gr. The devil's in it if you two ladies want help. I fly the pit.

Lord L. And I think, Mr. Grandison, you have fought a hard battle.

Mr. Gr. By my soul, I think so too. I have held it out better than I used to do.

Miss Gr. I protest I think you have. We shall brighten you up among us. I am mistaken if there were not two or three smart things said by my cousin. Pray, did any-body mind them? I should be glad to hear them again. Do you recollect them yourself, cousin?

Mr. Gr. You want to draw me on again, cousin Charlotte. But the d—l fetch me, if you do. I'll leave off while I am well.

Miss Gr. Would you have thought it, Lady L.! My cousin has *discretion* as well as *smartness*. I congratulate you, Sir: A new discovery!—But hush! 'Tis time for both to have done.

Sir Charles entered. Mr. Grandison a sufferer again? said he.

Mr. Gr. No, no! Pretty well off this bout—Miss Byron, I have had the better end of the staff, I believe.

Harriet. I can't say that, Sir. But you got off, I think, in very good time.

Mr. Gr. And that's a victory, to what it used to be, I can assure you. Nobody ever could *awe* Miss Grandison.

Miss Gr. Coward!—You would *now* begin again, would you—Sir Charles loves to take me *down*.

Mr. Gr. Never, madam, but when you are *up*: and laughed heartily.

Miss Gr. Witty too!—a man of repartee! A *verbal* wit! And that's half as good as a punster, at any time.

Sir Ch. Fight it out, cousin Grandison. You can laugh on, though the laugh of every other person should be against you.

Mr. Gr. And thou, Brutus?—It is time to have done.

As I think these conversations characteristic, I hope the recital of them will be excused. Yet I am sensible, those things that go off well in conversation, do not always *read* to equal advantage.

They would fain have engaged us to stay supper: but we excused ourselves. I promised to breakfast with them.

I chose not to take my maid with me. Jenny is to be made over to me occasionally, for the time of my stay. Dr. Bartlett had desired to be excused. So our party is only the two sisters, Lord L. Miss Jervois, and I.

Sir Charles and Mr. Grandison are to set out for their journey early in the morning.

Adieu, my Lucy. It is late: and sleepiness promises to befriend your

HARRIET.

LETTER VIII.

MRS. SELBY TO MISS BYRON.*

MY DEAREST CHILD, Selby-house, Sunday, [illegible] 5.

WE are all extremely affected with yo[illegible]t situation. Such apparent struggles bet[illegible]our

* This letter and the two that follow it, are inserted in this place, though not received, and answered, till Miss Byron was at Colnebrook, for the sake of keeping entire the subject she writes upon from thence.

natural openness of heart, and the confessions of a young, of a new passion, and that so laudably founded, and so visibly increasing—O my love, you must not affect reserves. They will sit very awkwardly upon a young woman, who never knew what affectation and concealment were.

You have laid me under a difficulty with respect to Lady D. She is to be with me on Saturday next. I have not written to her, though you desired I would; since, in truth, we all think, that her proposals deserve consideration; and because we are afraid, that a *greater* happiness will never be yours and ours. It is impossible, my dear, to imagine, that such a man as Sir Charles Grandison should not have seen the woman whom he could love, before he saw you; or whom he had not been engaged to love by his *gratitude*, as I may call it, for her *love*. Has not his sister talked of half a score ladies, who would break their hearts for him, were he to marry?—And may not this be the reason why he does not?

You see what an amiable openness of heart there is in the Countess of D. You see, that your own frankness is a particular recommendation of you to her. I had told her, that you were disengaged in your affections: by your own disclaiming to her the proposed relation, you have given reason to so wise a lady to think it otherwise; or that you are not so much above affectation, as she had hoped you were. And though we were grieved to read how much you were pushed by Miss Grandison*, yet Lady D. will undoubtedly make the same observations and inferences that Miss Grandison did. And what would you have me do? since you cannot give a stronger instance of your affections being engaged, than by declining such a proposal as Lady D. made, before

* Letter V.

you have conversed with, or even seen Lord D. And it becomes not your character nor mine, either to equivocate, or to say the thing that is not.

Lady L. you think (and indeed it appears) hinted to Lady D. that Sir Charles stands not in the way of Lord D.'s application. I see not therefore, that there can be any room to hope from that quarter. Nor will your fortune, I doubt, be thought considerable enough. And as Sir Charles is not engaged by affection, and is generous and munificent, there is hardly room to imagine, but that, in prudence, fortune will have some weight with him. At least on our side, that ought to be supposed, and to make a part of our first proposals, were a treaty to be begun.

Your grandmamma will write to you with her own hand. I refer myself wholly to her. Her wisdom, and her tenderness for you, we all know. She and I have talked of *every-thing*. Your uncle will not railly you, as he has done. We still continue resolved not to prescribe to your inclinations. We are afraid therefore of advising you as to this new proposal. But your grandmamma is very much pleased that I have not written, as you would have had me, a letter of absolute refusal to the countess.

Your uncle has been enquiring into the state of Sir Charles Grandison's affairs. We have heard so many good things of him, that I have desired Mr. Selby to make no further enquiries, unless we could have some hopes of calling him ours. But do you, my dear, nevertheless, omit nothing that comes to your knowledge, that may let us know in him what a good man is, and should be.

His magnanimity in refusing to engage in a duel, yet acquitting himself so honourably, as to leave no doubt of his courage, is an example, of itself, of a more than human rectitude of thinking and acting.

How would your grandfather have cherished such a young man! We every one of us admire and revere him at the same time; and congratulate you, my dear, and his sisters, on the happy issue of the affair between him and that vile Sir Hargrave.

You will let me know your mind as to the affair of Lord D.; and that by the next post. Be not rash: be not hasty. I am afraid I pushed your delicacy too much in my former. Your uncle says, that you are at times not so frank in directly owning your passion, as from your natural openness of heart he expected you would be, when a worthy object had attracted you: and he triumphs over us, in the imagination, that he has at last detected you of affectation in some little degree. We all see, and own, your struggle between virgin-modesty and openness of heart, as apparent in many passages of your letters; and we lay part of your reserve to the apprehensions you must have of his raillery: but after you have declared, "That you had rather converse but one hour in a week with Sir Charles Grandison" (and *his sister* you put in: and sisters are good convenient people sometimes to a bashful or beginning lover, of our sex) "than be the wife of any man you have ever seen or known; and that, mean as the word *pity* sounds, you would rather have his pity than the love of any other man."—Upon my word, my dear, you need not be backward to speak quite out. Excuse me, my child.

I have just now read the inclosed. Had I known your grandmamma could have written so long a letter, I might have spared much of mine. Hers is worthy of her. We all subscribe to it; but yet will be determined by your next, as to the steps to be taken in relation to the proposal of Lady D. But if you love, be not ashamed to own it to us. The man is Sir Charles Grandison.

With all our blessings and prayers for you, I bid you, my dear love, adieu.

MARIANNA SELBY.

LETTER IX.

MRS. SHIRLEY TO MISS BYRON.

Sunday, March 5.

DON'T be afraid, don't be ashamed, my dearest life, to open your whole heart to your aunt Selby and me. You know how we all dote upon you. It is no disgrace for a young woman of virtue to be in love with a worthy man. Love is a natural passion. *You* have shewn, I am sure, if ever young creature did shew, that you are no giddy, no indiscreet person. Not Greville, with all his gaiety; not Fenwick, with all his adulation; not the more respectable Orme, with all his obsequiousness; nor yet the imploring Fowler; nor the terrifying, the shocking Sir Hargrave Pollexfen; have seen the least shadow of vanity or weakness in you. How happily have you steered through difficulties, in which the love of being admired often involves meaner minds! And how have you, with mingled dignity and courteousness, intitled yourself to the esteem, and even veneration, of those whom you refused! And why refused? Not from pride, but principle; and because you could not love any one of them, as you thought you ought to love the man to whom you gave your hand.

And at last, when the man appeared to you, who was worthy of your love; who had so powerfully protected you from the lawless attempt of a fierce and cruel pretender; a man who proved to be the best of brothers, friends, landlords, masters, and the

bravest and best of men; is it to be wondered at, that a heart, which never before was won, should discover sensibility, and acknowledge its fellow-heart?—What reason then can *you* have for shame? And why seeks my Harriet to draw a curtain between herself and her symphathising friends? You see, my dear, that we are above speaking slightly, because of our uncertainty, of a man that all the world praises. Nor are you, child, so weak as to be treated with such poor policy.

You were not educated, my dear, in artifice. Disguises never sat so ill upon any woman, as they do, in most of your late letters, upon you. Every child in love-matters would find you out. But be it your glory, whether our wishes are, or are not answered, that your affection is laudable; that the object of it is not a man mean in understanding, profligate in morals, nor sordid in degree; but such an one as all we your friends are as much in love with as you can be. Only, my dear love, my Harriet, the support of my life, and comfort of my evil days, endeavour, for my sake, and for the sake of us all, to restrain so far your laudable inclination, as that, if it be not your happy lot to give us, as well as yourself, so desirable a blessing, you may not suffer in your health (a health so precious to me) and put yourself on a foot with vulgar girls run away with by their headstrong passions. The more desirable the object, the nobler the conquest of your passion, if it is to be overcome. Nevertheless, speak out, my dear, your whole heart to us, in order to intitle yourself to our best advice: and as to your uncle Selby, do not let his raillery pain you: he diverts us as well as himself by it: he gains nothing over us in the arguments he affects to hold with us: and you must know, that his whole honest heart is wrapt up in his and our Harriet. Worthy man! He would

not, any more than I, be able to support his spirits, were any misfortune to befal his niece.

Your aunt Selby has just now shewn me her letter to you. She repeats in it, as a very strong expression in yours, "That you had rather converse with this excellent man but one hour in a week, than be the wife of any man you have ever seen or known." It *is* a strong expression; but, to me, is an expression greatly to your honour; since it shews, that the *mind*, and not the *person*, is the principal object of your love.

I knew that, if ever you did love, it would be a love of the purest kind. As therefore it has not so much *person* in it, as most loves; suffer it not to triumph over your reason; nor, because you cannot have the man you could prefer, resolve against having any other. Have I not taught you, that marriage is a duty, whenever it can be entered into with prudence? What a mean, what a selfish mind must that person have, whether man or woman, who can resolve against entering into the state, because it has its cares, its fatigues, its inconveniencies! Try Sir Charles Grandison, my dear, by this rule. If he forbears to marry on such narrow motives, this must be one of his great imperfections. Nor be afraid to try. No man is absolutely perfect.

But Sir Charles may have engagements, from which he cannot free himself. My Harriet, I hope, will not give way to a passion, which is not likely to be returned, if she find that to be the case. You hope, you prettily said in one of your letters, "that you shall not be undone by a *good* man." After such an escape as you had from Sir Hargrave, I have no fear from a *bad* one: but, my child, if you are undone by a good one, it must be your own fault, while neither he nor his sisters give you encouragement.

I know, my dear, how these suppositions will hurt your delicacy: but then you must doubly guard yourself; for the *reality* will be worse wounding to that delicacy, than the *supposition* ought to be. If there be but one man in the world that can *undo* you, will you not guard against him?

I long to fold my dearest Harriet to my fond heart: but yet, this that follows, is the advice I give, as to the situation you are now in: Lose no opportunity of cultivating the friendship of his amiable sisters [By the way, if Miss Grandison guesses at your mind, she is not so generous in her raillery as is consistent with the rest of her amiable character]. Never deny them your company, when they request it. Miss Grandison has promised you the history of their family. Exact the performance of that promise from her. You will thus come at further lights, by which you may be guided in your future steps.—In particular, you will find out, whether the sisters espouse the interest of any other woman; though Sir Charles's reservedness, even to them, may not let them know the secrets of his heart in this particular. And if they do not espouse any other person's interest, why may they not be made *your* friends, my dear?—As to fortune, could we have any hint what would be expected, we would do every-thing in our power to make that matter easy; and must be content with moderate settlements in your favour.

But as I approve of your aunt's having forborn to write, as you would have had her, to Lady D. What shall we do in that affair? it will be asked.

What? Why thus: Lady D. has made it a point, that you are disengaged in your affections: your aunt has signified to her that you are: you have given that lady a hint, which, you say, overclouded her brow. She will be here on Saturday next.

Then will she, no doubt, expect the openest dealing.—And she ought to have it. Her own frankness demands it; and the character we have hitherto supported, and I hope always shall support, requires it. I would therefore let Lady D. know the whole of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen's attempt [you, my dear, was so laudably frank as to hint it to her] and of the generous protection given you by Sir Charles Grandison. Truth never leaves room for self-reproach. Let your aunt Selby then own, that you had written to her; declining, with the most respectful gratitude, the honour intended you: which she could no otherwise account for, than by supposing, and indeed believing, that you would prefer Sir Charles Grandison, from motives of gratitude, to any other man: but that you knew nothing of his engagements; nor had reason to look upon any part of his behaviour to you, but as the effect of his general politeness; nor that his sisters meant more by calling you *sister*, than their *brother's* sister, as well as *theirs*.

All this shall be mentioned to Lady D. in *strict confidence*. Then will Lady D. know the whole truth. She will be enabled, as she *ought*, to judge for herself. You will not appear in her eye as guilty of affectation. We shall all act in character. If Lady L. and Miss Grandison did (as you suppose) acquaint Lady D. that you were not addressed by their brother, they will be found to have said the truth; and you know, my dear, that we should be as ready to do justice to others' veracity, as to our own. She will see, that your regard for Sir Charles (if a regard you have, that may be an obstacle to her views) is owing to a laudable gratitude for his protection given to a young woman, whose heart was *before* absolutely disengaged.

And what will be the consequence?—Why, either

that her ladyship will think no more of the matter; and then you will be just where you were; or, that she will interest herself in finding out Sir Charles's engagements: and as you have communicated to Lady L. and Miss Grandison the letters that have passed between Lady D. and your aunt, together with the contents of yours, so far as relates to the proposal; and as Lady D. is acquainted with those two ladies; she will probably inform herself of *their* sentiments in relation to the one affair and the other; and the matter on every side, by this means, will sooner come to a decision, than probably it can any other way.

I don't know whether I express myself clearly. I am not what I was: but blessed be God, that I am what I am! I did not think, that, in so little a time, I could have written so much as I have. But my dear Harriet is my subject; and her happiness is, and has ever been, my only care, since I lost the husband of my youth, the dear man who divided with me that, and all my cares; who had a love for you equal to my own; and who, I think, would have given just *such* advice. What would Mr. Shirley have thought? How would he, in the like case, have acted? are the questions I always ask myself, before I give my opinion in any material cases, especially in those which relate to you.

And here let me commend a sentiment of yours, that is worthy of your dear grandfather's pupil: "I should despise myself," say you, "were I capable of keeping one man in suspense, while I was balancing in favour of another."

Good young creature, hold fast your principles, whatever befals you. Look upon this world as you have been taught to look upon it. I have lived to a great age: yet, to look backward to the time of my youth, when I was not a stranger to the hopes and

fears that now agitate you, what a short space does it seem to be! Nothing withholds my wishes to be released, but my desire of seeing the darling of my heart, my sweet orphan-girl, happy in a worthy man's protection. O that it could be in——But shall we, my dear, prescribe to Providence? How know we what *that* has designed for Sir Charles Grandison? *His* welfare is the concern of hundreds, perhaps. He, compared to us, is as the public to the private. I hope we are good people: *comparatively*, I am sure, we are good. That, however, is not the way by which we shall be judged hereafter. But yet, to him, we are but as that private.

Don't think, however, my best love, that I have lived too long to be sensible of what most affects you. Of your pleasures, your pains, I can and do partake. Your late harassings, so tender, so lovely a blossom, cost me many a pang; and still my eyes bear witness to my sensibility, as the cruel scenes are at times read to me again, or as I recal them to memory. But all I mean is, to arm you against feeling too sensibly, when it *is* known, the event which is now hidden in the bosom of Providence, should it, as is but too likely, prove unfavourable.

You have a great deal of writing upon your hands. We cannot dispense with any of that. But if you write to your aunt Selby (as the time till next Saturday is short) that will be writing to us both.

God preserve, direct, and bless, my sweet orphan-child!—This is the hourly prayer of

Your ever-affectionate grandmother,

HENRIETTA SHIRLEY.

LETTER X.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MRS. SELBY.

Colnebrook, Tuesday, March 7.

I HAVE the favour of yours, and of my dear grandmamma's just brought me. The contents are so affecting, that, though in full assembly, as I may say, in this delightful family, I begged to be permitted to withdraw, to write to them. Miss Grandison saw my confusion, my puzzle, what shall I call it? To be charged so home, my dear aunt!—*Such apparent struggles*—And were they, madam, so *very* apparent?—A *young*, a *new passion!*—And so *visibly increasing!*—Pray, madam, if it be *so*, it is not at its height—And is it not, while but in its progress, conquerable?—But have I been guilty of *affectation?* of *reserves?*—If I have, my uncle has been very merciful to the *awkward* girl.

And you think it impossible, madam, but *he* has seen women whom he could love, before he saw me? Very likely! But was it kind to turn the word *gratitude* upon me in such a manner?

I do see what an amiable openness of heart there is in Lady D. I admire her for it, and for her other matronly qualities. What can *you* do, madam? What can *I* do? That is the question, called upon as I am, by my grandmamma as well as by you, to speak still plainer, plain as in your opinion I *had* spoken, and indeed in my own, now I read the free sentence, drawn out and separated from the rest of the letter. My grandmamma forgives, and even praises me, for this sentence. She encourages me to speak still plainer. It is no disgrace, she says, for a woman of virtue to be in love with a worthy man. Love is a natural passion, she tells

me: yet cautions me against suffering it to triumph over my reason; in short, not to love till there shall be a certainty of return. And so I can love *as I will*, *when* I will, nay *whom* I will; for if *he* won't have me, I am desired not to resolve against marrying some other; Lord D. for example, if *he* will be so good as to have me.

Well, but upon a full examination of my heart, how do I find it, now I am called upon by my two most venerable friends, to *undraw the curtain*, and to *put off the disguises*, through which every *child in love-matters* finds me out? Shall I speak my whole heart? —To such sympathizing friends, surely I ought. Well, then, I own to you, my honoured grandmamma and aunt, that I cannot think of encouraging any other address. Yet have I no hope. I look upon myself as presumptuous: upon him as too excellent, and too considerable; for he has a great estate, and still greater expectations: and as to personal and intellectual merit, what woman can deserve him!—Even in the article of fortune only, you think that, in prudence, a man so munificent should look higher.

Be pleased therefore, madam, in conformity to my grandmamma's advice, to tell Lady D. from me, 'That I think her laudable openness deserves like openness: that your Harriet *was* disengaged in her affections, absolutely disengaged, when you told her that she was: tell her what afterwards happened: tell her how my *gratitude* engaged me: that, at first, it was no more; but that now, being called upon, on this occasion, I have owned my gratitude exalted' [it may not, I hope, be said, *debased*, the object so worthy] 'into—love'—Yes, say *love*—since I act too *awkwardly* in the *disguises* I have assumed; 'That, therefore, I can no more in *justice*,

than by *inclination*, think of any other man: and own to her, that her ladyship has, however, engaged my respectful love, even to reverence, by her goodness to me in the visit she honoured me with; and that, for *her* sake, had I seen nothing objectable in Lord D. upon an interview, and further acquaintance, I could have given ear to this proposal, preferably to any other that had yet been made me, were my heart as free, as it was when she made her first proposal.' And yet I own to you, my venerable friends, that I always think of Mr. Orme with grateful pity, for his humble, for his modest perseverance. What would I give to see Mr. Orme married to some very worthy woman, with whom he could be happy!

Finally, bespeak for me her ladyship's favour and friendship; but *not* to be renewed till my lord is married—And may his nuptials be as happy as wished to be by a mother so worthy! But tell her, at the same time, that I would not, for twelve times my lord's 12,000l. a year, give my hand to him, or to any man, while another had a place in my heart; however unlikely it is, that I may be called by the name of the man I prefer.

But tell Lady D. all this in confidence, in the strictest confidence; among more general reasons regarding the delicacy of our sex, for fear the family I am with, who now love, should hate, and, what would be still worse, despise, your Harriet, for her presumption!—I think I could not bear that!—Don't mind this great blot—Forgive it—It *would* fall—My pen found it, before I saw it.

* * * *

As to myself; whatever be my lot, I will endeavour to reap consolation from these and other passages in the two precious letters before me:

"If you love, be not ashamed to own it to *us*—The man is Sir Charles Grandison."

"My affection is laudable: the object of it is a man not mean in understanding; nor profligate in morals; nor sordid in d··ree. All my friends are in love with him as well a. '."

"My love is a love of the purest kind."

"And I ought to acquiesce, because Sir Charles, compared to *us*, is as the public to the private. Private considerations, therefore, should be as nothing to me."

Noble instructions! my dearest two mammas! to which I will endeavour to give their full weight.

And now let me take it a little unkindly, that you call me your *orphan-girl!* You two, and my honoured uncle, have supplied all wanting relations to me: continue then to pray for, and to bless, not your orphan, but your real, daughter, in all love and reverence,

HARRIET BYRON-SHIRLEY-SELBY.

LETTER XI.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS LUCY SELBY.

Colnebrook, Tuesday, Ma·ch 7.

HERE I am, my dear Lucy, returned to this happy asylum: but with what different emotions from the first time I entered it! How did my heart flutter, when one of Sir Charles's servants, who attended us on horseback, pointed out to us, at the command of the ladies, the very spot where the two chariots met, and the contest began! The recollection pained me: yet do I not owe to that terrifying incident the friendship I am admitted into with so amiable a family?

Miss Grandison, ever obliging, has indulged me in my choice of having a room to myself. I shall have the more leisure for writing to you, my dear friends.

Both she and Lady L. are very urgent with me to shew them some of the letters in our correspondence; and Miss Grandison says, if that will encourage me to oblige them, they will shew me some of their brother's.—Who would not be tempted by such an exchange? I am more than half-afraid—but surely, in such a heap of stuff as I have written, there is something that I can *read* to them. Shall I be permitted, do you think, to have my letters returned me for this purpose? The remarks of these ladies on what I shall think fit to shew them, will be of great use in helping to settle my judgment. I know I have thrown out many things at random; and, being a young creature, and not passed the *age of fancy*, have, in all those sentiments which are not borrowed, been very superficial. How can it be otherwise?

The conversation in the coach turned upon their own family (for I put in my claim to Miss Grandison's former promise on that head); from which I gathered the following particulars.

Sir Thomas Grandison was one of the handsomest men of his time: he had a great notion of magnificence in living; and went deep into all the fashionable diversions, except gaming with cards and dice; though he ran into one as expensive, but which he called a nobler vice; valuing himself upon his breed of race-horses and hunters, and upon his kennel; in both which articles he was extravagant to profusion.

His father, Sir Charles, was as frugal as Sir Thomas was profuse. He was a purchaser all his life; and left his son, besides an estate of 6,000l. a year in

England, and near 2,000l. a year in Ireland, rich in money.

His lady was of a noble family; sister to Lord W. She was, as you have already been told, the most excellent of women. I was delighted to see her two daughters bear testimony to her goodness, and to their own worth, by their tears. It was impossible, in the character of so good a woman, not to think of my own mamma; and I could not help, on the remembrance, joining my tears with theirs.

Miss Jervois also wept, not only from tenderness of nature, and sympathy, but, as she owned, from regret, that she had not the same reason to rejoice in a living mother, as we had to remember affectionately the departed.

What I have written, and shall farther write, to the disadvantages of Sir Thomas Grandison, I gathered from what was dropt by one lady, and by the other, at different times; for it was beautiful to observe with what hesitation and reluctance they mentioned any of his failings, with what pleasure his good qualities! heightening the one, and extenuating the other. O my Lucy, how would their hearts have overflowed in his praises, had they had such a faultless father, and excellent man, as was my father! Sweet is the remembrance of good parents to good children!

Lady Grandison brought a great fortune to Sir Thomas. He had a fine poetical vein, which he was fond of cultivating. Though his fortune was so ample, it was his person, and his verses, that won the lady from several competitors. He had not, however, *her* judgment. He was a poet; and I have heard my grandfather say, that to be a poet, requires a heated imagination, which often runs away with the judgment.

This lady took the consent of all her friends in

her choice; but here seemed a hint to drop from Lady L. that they consented, *because* it was her choice; for Sir Thomas, from the day he entered upon his estate, set out in a way that every-body concluded would diminish it.

He made, however, a *kind* husband, as it is called. His good sense and his politeness, and the pride he took to be thought one of the best-bred men in England, secured her *complaisant* treatment. But Lady Grandison had qualities that deserved one of the best and tenderest of men. Her eye and her ear had certainly misled her. I believe a woman, who chooses a man whom every-body admires, if the man be not good, must expect that he will have calls and inclinations, that will make him think the character of a domestic man beneath him.

She endeavoured, at setting out, to engage his—*companionableness*—shall I call it? She was fond of her husband. He had reason to be, and *was*, proud of his wife: but when he had shewed her every-where, and she began to find herself in circumstances, which ought to domesticate a wife of a much gayer turn than Lady Grandison pretended to have, he gave way to his predominant bias; and after a while, leaving the whole family care to her, for her excellence in every branch of which he was continually praising her (he did her that justice): he was but little at home in the summer; and, in the winter, was generally engaged four months in the diversions of this great town; and was the common patron of all the performers, whether at plays, operas, or concerts.

At first setting out in this way, he was solicitous to carry his lady with him to town. She always cheerfully accepted of his invitation, when she saw he was urgent with her to go. She would not give a pretence for so gay a man to throw off that regard

to appearances, which pride made him willing to keep up. But afterwards, his invitations growing fainter and fainter, and she finding that her presence lengthened the time of his stay in town, and added greatly to his expences (for he never would abate, when they were together, of that magnificence in which he delighted to live in the country) she declined going up: and having by this time her three children, she found it was as agreeable to Sir Thomas, as to herself, that she should turn her thoughts wholly to the doméstic duties. Lady Grandison, when she found that she could not bring Sir Thomas to lessen his great expences, supposed it to be wisdom to endeavour, to the utmost of her power, to enable him to support them without discredit to himself, or visible hurt to his family. The children were young, and were not likely to make demands upon him for many years to come.

Here was a mother, my dear! Who will say, that mothers may not be the *most* useful persons in the family, when they do their duty, and their husbands are defective in theirs? Sir Thomas Grandison's delight centered in himself; Lady Grandison's in her husband and children. What a superiority, what an inferiority!

Yet had this lady, with the best œconomy, no narrowness in her heart. She was beloved for her generosity and benevolence. Her poor neighbours adored her. Her table was plenteous. She was hospitable, as well from the largeness of her own heart, as to give credit to her husband; and so far to accommodate herself to his taste, as that too great a difference might not be seen between his absence and presence. As occasions offered, she would confer benefits in the name of a husband, whom, perhaps, she had not seen of months, and knew not whether she might see for months to come. She was satis-

fied, though hers was the *first* merit, with the *second* merit reflected from that she gave him: "I am but Sir Thomas's almoner: I know I shall please Sir Thomas by doing this: Sir Thomas would have done thus: perhaps *he* would have been more bountiful had he been present."

He had been once absent from this admirable wife six whole months, when he left her but for one: he designed only an excursion to Paris, when he set out; but, when in company as gay as himself, while he was there, he extended his tour; and, what was still more inexcusable, he let his lady hear from him by second-hand only. He never wrote one line to her with his own; yet, on his return, affected to surprise her by a sudden appearance, when she knew not that he was in England.

Was not this intolerably vain in him? The moment he appeared, so secure was he of his lady's unmerited love, that he supposed the joy she would break out into, would banish from her thoughts all memory of his past unkindness.

He asked her, however, after the first emotions (for she received him with real joy) If she could easily forgive him?—Forgive you, Sir?—Yes, if you can forgive yourself.

This he called severe. Well he might; for it was just. Lady Grandison's goodness was founded in principle; not in tameness or servility.

Be not serious, Sir Thomas, said my lady; and flung her arms about him. You know, by your question, you were unkind. Not one line from your own hand neither—But the seeing you now safe and well, compensates me for all the anxieties you have given me in the past six tedious months—Can I say they were not anxious ones? But I pity you, Sir, for the pleasure you have lost by so long an absence: let me lead you to the nursery; or, let the dear

prattlers come down to receive their father's blessing. How delightful is their dawning reason! Their improvements exceed my hopes: of what pleasure do you deprive yourself by these long absences!

My dear Miss Grandison, *let* me write on. I am upon a sweet subject. Why will you tear me from it? Who, Lucy, would not almost wish to be the wife, the half-slighted wife, of a gay Sir Thomas, to be a Lady Grandison?

One reflection, my dear Miss Grandison, let me make, before I attend you; lest I should lose it: What man who now, at one view, takes in the whole gay, fluttering life of Sir Thomas Grandison, though young, gay, and fluttering, himself, can propose to be more happy than Sir Thomas thought himself? What woman, who, in like manner, can take in the whole, useful, prudent, serene, benevolent, life of Lady Grandison, whatever turn to pleasure, less solid, and more airy, she may have, sees not, from this imperfect sketch, all that they should wish to be; and the transitory vanity of the one, and the solid happiness that must attend the other, as well here as hereafter?

Dear lady!—had you not hurried me so, how much better should I have expressed myself!

I come. I come.

LETTER XII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Miss Grandison has been making me read aloud some part of the letter I had just writ to you, Lucy. We know, said she, it is about *us*; but we shall think what you have written, greatly to our disad-

vantage, if we cannot hear some of it. Then she insisted (she is an arbitrary dear creature) on my giving the company [it was at tea, and Lord L. present] such histories as she should call for of my own family. On this condition only, said she, will we consent to be made fully known, as I find we shall, if I do not steal away your pen and ink, to *our* grandmother Shirley, *our* aunt Selby, and even to *our* Lucy.

Do not you think, Lucy, I ran on with pleasure in describing the persons and tempers of my father and mother, and relating their fortunes, loves, difficulties; as my grandmamma and aunt had enabled me to do, from what they used to recount in many a long summer-day, and in many a winter-evening, as we girls sat at work—Happy memorials! —Ay, but do you believe she did not question me about later events? She did, indeed, call upon me for two other histories.

And of whom? methinks you ask.

I won't tell *you*, Lucy: but if my *aunt* should be solicitous to know, and should *guess* that my uncle's and hers (so entertaining and instructive) was one of them; and if you, Lucy, should *guess* that the history of a young lady, whose discretion got the better of her love, and who cannot be dearer to herself than she is to me, is the other—Why, perhaps, neither my aunt, nor you, my dear, may be much mistaken.

Methinks I would fain rise now-and-then to my former *serene-pertness* [Allow you of the words so connected?]: but my heart is heavy.

They were delighted with a certain gentleman's humorous character and courtship; with his lady's prudence and goodness, in the one story: and in the other, with the young lady's victorious discretion. They wish to be personally acquainted with

each, and with my grandmamma. *All* the worthies in the world, my dear, are not in the Grandison-family!

* * *

Before I resume the continuation of the ladies' family-history, let me ask; don't you think, my dear, that God has blessed these happy children, for the sake of their excellent mother? And who knows, but for their duty to their less-deserving father? It is my notion, that one person's remissness in duty, where there is a reciprocal one, does not absolve the other party from the performance of his. It is difficult, indeed, to love so well a faulty or remiss parent, as a kind and good one. But our duty is indispensable; and where it is paid, a blessing may the rather be expected, as the parent has not done his. If, *when you do well, and suffer for it,* says the apostle, *ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*—Not to mention one consideration, which, however, ought not to be left out of the account; that a good child will be no less benefited by the *warning,* as Sir Charles no doubt is from his father's unhappy turn; than by the *example,* as he is from that of his excellent mother.

Lady L. referred to the paper given in by the short-hand writer, for the occasion (as mentioned by Sir Charles) to which these three worthy children owed the loss of such a mother *: and this drew her into a melancholy relation of some very affecting particulars. Among other things, she said, her mother regretted, in her last hours, that she had no opportunity, that she could think just and honourable, to lay by any-thing considerable for her daughters. Her jewels, and some valuable trinkets, she hoped, would be theirs; but that would be at their father's pleasure. I wish, said she, that my dear girls were to have between them the tenth

* Letter IV.

part of what I have saved—But I have done but my duty.

I have told you, Charlotte, said the countess, what my mother said to me, a few hours before she died; and I will repeat it to Miss Byron. After having, upon general principles, recommended filial duty, and brotherly and sisterly love to us all; and after my brother and sister had withdrawn; My dear Caroline, said she, let me add to the general arguments of the duty I have been enforcing upon you all, one respecting your *interest*, and let your sister know it. I am afraid there will be but a slender provision made for my dear girls. Your papa has the notion riveted in him, which is common to men of ancient families, that daughters are but incumbrances, and that the son is to be every-thing. He loves his girls: he loves you dearly: but he has often declared, that, were he to have entire all the fortune that descended to him from his father, he would not give to his daughters, marry whom they would, more than 5,000l. a-piece. Your brother loves you: he loves me. It will be in *his* power, should he survive your father, to be a friend to you. —Love your brother.

To my brother afterwards she said something: I believe, recommending his sisters to him; for we coming in, boy as he was in years, but man in behaviour and understanding, he took each of our hands —You remember it, Charlotte [both sisters wept]; —and kneeling down; and putting them in my mother's held-out dying hands, and bowing his face upon all three—All, madam—All, my dearest, best of mammas, that you have injoined—

He could say no more; and our arms were wet with his tears—Enough, enough, my son, I distress you!—And she kissed her own arm—These are precious tears—You embalm me, my son, with your

tears—O how precious the balm!—And she lifted up her head to kiss his cheek, and to repeat her blessings to the darling of her heart.

Who could refrain tears, my Lucy, on the representation of such a scene?—Miss Jervois and I wept, as if we had been present on the solemn occasion.

But, my Charlotte, give Miss Byron some brief account of the parting scene between my father and mother. She is affected as a sister should be—Tears, when time has matured a pungent grief into a sweet melancholy, are not hurtful; they are as the dew of the morning to the green herbage.

I cannot, said Miss Grandison—Do *you*, Lady L.

Lady L. proceeded—My father had long kept his chamber, from the unhappy adventure, which cost him and us all so dear. My mother, till she was forced to take to her bed, was constantly his attendant: and *then* was grieved she could not attend him still.

At last, the moment, happy to her, long dreaded by us, the releasing moment, approached. One last long farewell she wished to take of the man, who had been *ever* dear to her: and who had cost her *so* dear. He was told of her desire to be lifted to his bed-side in her bed; for one of his wounds (too soon skinned over) was broken out, and he was confined to his bed. He ordered himself to be carried, in a great chair, to hers. But then followed *such* a scene—

All we three children were in the room, kneeling by the bed-side—praying—weeping—O how ineffectually—Not even hope remaining—Best beloved of my soul! in faltering accents, said my mother, her head raised by pillows, so as that she sat upright —Forgive the desire of my heart once more to see you!—They would not bring me to *you!*—O how I

distress you! For my father sobbed; every feature of his face seemed swelled almost to bursting, and working as if in mortal agonies.—Charlotte, relieve me!—

The sweet lady's eyes were drowned in tears—

I cannot, said Miss Grandison; her handkerchief spread over her face.

Miss Emily sobbed. She held her hand before her eyes: her tears trickled through her fingers.

I was affected beyond measure—Yet besought her to proceed.—She went on.

I have endeavoured, said my mother, in broken sentences—It was my wish—It was my pride: indeed, my chiefest pride,—to be a good wife!—

O my dear!—You *have* been—My father could not say what.

Forgive my imperfections, Sir!—

O my dearest life! You had no imperfections: I, I, was all imper— He could not speak out the word for his tears.

Bless your children in my sight: God hitherto has blessed them! God will continue to bless them, if they continue to deserve their father's blessing. Dear Sir Thomas, as you love them, bless them in my sight. I doubt not your goodness to them—But the blessing of a dying mother, joined with that of a surviving father—must have efficacy!

My father looked earnestly to us all—He could not speak.

My brother, following my mother's dying eye, which was cast upon my father, arose from his knees, and approaching my father's chair, cast himself at his feet. My father threw his arms about his neck —God bless—God bless my son, said he—And make him a better man than his father. My mother, demanding the cheek of her beloved son, said, God bless my dearest child, and make you an honour

to your father's family, and to your mother's memory!

We girls followed my brother's example.

God bless my daughters!—God bless you, sweet loves, said my father; first kissing one, then the other, as we kneeled.—God make you as good women as your mother: then, then, will you deserve to be happy.

God bless you, my dear girls, God bless you both, said my mother, kissing each, as you are dutiful to your father, and as you love one another—I hope I have given you no bad example.

My father began to accuse himself. My brother with the piety of the patriarch's two best sons, retired, that he might not hear his father's confessions. We followed him to the farther end of the room. The manly youth sat down between us, and held a hand of each between his: his noble heart was penetrated: he two or three times lifted the hand of each to his lips. But he could only once speak, his heart seeming ready to burst; and that was, as I remember, O my sisters!—Comfort yourselves!—But who can say comfort?—These tears are equally our duty and our relief.

My mother retained to the last that generosity of mind which had ever distinguished her. She would not permit my father to proceed with his self-accusation: Let us look forward, my dearest, my only love, said she. I have a blessed hope before me: I pity, as well as pray for, survivors: you are a man of sense, Sir, and of enlarged sentiments: God direct you according to them, and comfort you! All my fear was (and that more particularly for some of the last past months) that *I* should have been the mournful survivor. In a very few moments all my sufferings will be over; and God give you, when you come to this unavoidable period of all human vanity,

the same happy prospects that are now opening to me! O Sir, believe me, all worldly joys are now nothing; *less* than nothing: even my love of you and of the dear pledges of our mutual love withholds not *now* my wishes after a happier state. There may we meet, and never be separated!—Forgive me only, my beloved husband, if I have ever made you for one hour unhappy or uneasy—Forgive the petulancies of my *love!*

Who can bear this goodness? said my father: I have not deserved——

Dear Sir, no more—Were you not the husband of my choice?—And now your grief affects me—Leave me, Sir. You bring me back again to earth—God preserve you, watch over you, *heal* you, support you. Your hand, Sir Thomas Grandison, the name that was ever so pleasant in my ears! Your hand, Sir! Your heart was my treasure: I have now, and only now, a better treasure, a diviner love, in view. Adieu, and in this world for ever adieu, my husband, my friend, my Grandison!

She turned her head from him, sunk upon her pillows, and fainted; and so saw not, had not the *grief* to see, the stronger heart of my father overcome; for he fainted away, and was carried out in his chair by the servants who brought him in. He was in a strong convulsion-fit, between his not half-cured wounds and his grief; and recovered not till all was over with my blessed mother.

After my father was carried out, she came to herself. Her chaplain was once more admitted. The fatal moment approached. She was asked, if she would see her children again? No, she said; but bid her last blessing be repeated to them, and her charge, of *loving one another*, in the words of our Saviour, as *she had loved us:* and when the chaplain came to read a text, which she had imperfectly

pointed to, but so as to be understood, she repeated, in faltering accents, but with more strength of voice than she had had for an hour before, *I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith—There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness:* and then her voice failing, she gave signs of satisfaction, in the hope of being entitled to that crown; and expired in an ejaculation that her ebbing life could not support.

O my Lucy! may my latter end, and the latter end of all I love, be like hers! The two ladies were in speechless tears, so was Miss Jervois, so was I, for some minutes. And for an hour or two, all the joys of life were as nothing to me. Even the regard I had entertained for the excellent son of a lady *so* excellent, my protector, my deliverer, had, for some hours, subsided, and was as nothing to me. Even now that I have concluded this moving recapitulation, it seems as nothing; and the whole world, my dear, is as a bit of dirt under my feet.

LETTER XIII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

THE son was inconsolable upon his mother's death He loved his father, but next to adored his mother. His father, though he had given so little attention to his education, was excessively fond of him: and no doubt but he the more easily satisfied himself on this head, as he knew his remissness was so well supplied by his lady's care, which mingled with the cares of the masters of the several sciences, who came home to him, at her desire.

A deep melancholy having seized the young gen-

tleman on a loss so irreparable, his father, who himself was greatly grieved, and the more, as he could not but reproach himself as having at least hastened that loss, was alarmed for his son; and yielded to the entreaties of General W. brother of Lord W. to permit him to travel. The general recommended for a governor to the young gentleman, an officer under him, who had been wounded, and obliged to quit the military service. Sir Thomas allowed his son 800l. a-year, from the day of his setting out on his travels, which he augmented afterwards to 1,000l. Sir Charles was about seventeen when his mother died.

The two daughters were taken by Lady W. But she dying in about twelve months after Lady Grandison, they returned to their father; who, by that time, had pretty well got over his grief for the loss of his lady, and was quite recovered of the wounds which he received in the duel that cost her her life.

He placed over his daughters, as governess (though they both took exceptions at that title, supposing themselves of age to manage for themselves) the widow of one of his gay friends, Oldham by name, whose fortune had not held out as Sir Thomas's had done. Men of strong health, I have heard my grandfather say, and of a riotous turn, should not, in mere *compassion*, keep company with men of feebler constitutions, and make them the companions of their riots. So may one say, I believe, that extravagant men, of great and small fortunes, are equally ill-suited; since the expences which will but shake the one, will quite demolish the other.

Mrs. Oldham had fine qualities, and was an œconomist. She deserved a better husband than had fallen to her lot; and the young ladies, having had a foundation laid by a still more excellent manager, received no small advantage from her skill in family-

affairs. But it was related to me with reluctance, and as what I must know on a further acquaintance with their family, if they did not tell it to me, that Sir Thomas was grateful to this lady in a way that cost her her reputation. She was obliged, in short, in little more than a twelvemonth to quit the country, and to come up to town. She had an indisposition, which kept her from going abroad for a month or two.

Lady L. being then about nineteen, and Miss Grandison about sixteen, they had spirit enough to oppose the return of this lady to her charge. They undertook themselves to manage every-thing at the capital seat in Hampshire.

Sir Thomas had another seat in Essex. Thither, on the reluctance of the young ladies to receive again Mrs. Oldham, he carried her; and they, as well as every-body else, for some time, apprehended they were actually married. She was handsome; well descended; and though she became so unhappily sensible of the favours and presents by which Sir Thomas made way to her heart, she had an untainted character when he took her as a governess to the young ladies.

Was not Sir Thomas very, very faulty, with regard to this poor woman?—She had already suffered enough from a bad husband, to whom she remarkably well performed her duty.—Poor woman!—The example to his own daughters was an abominable one. She was the relict of his friend: she was under his protection: thrown into it by her unhappy circumstances.—Were not these great aggravations to his crime?—Happy for those parents who live not to see such catastrophes as attended this child! This darling, it seems: not undeservedly so; and whom they thought they had not unhappily married to Mr. Oldham—And he, poor man! thought him-

self not unhappy in Sir Thomas Grandison's acquaintance; though it ended in his emulating him in his expences, with a much less estate; in the ruin of his fortune, which indeed was his own fault; and in the ruin of his wife's virtue, which was more Sir Thomas's than hers.—May I say so?—If I may not (since women, whose glory is their chastity, must not yield to temptation) had not the husband, however, something to answer for, who, with his eyes open, lived at such a rate, against his wife's dutiful remonstrances, and better example, as reduced her (after his death) to the necessity of dependence on another's favour, and *such* another!

Sir Thomas was greatly displeased with his daughters, for resisting him in the return of their governess. He had thought the reason of her withdrawing a secret, because he wished it to be one: and yet her disgrace was, at the time, every-where talked of, but in *his* presence.

This woman is still living. She has two children by Sir Thomas, who are also living; and one by Mr. Oldham. I shall be told more of her history, when the ladies come to give me some account of their brother's.

Sir Thomas went on in the same gay fluttering way that he had done all his life. The love of *pleasure*, as it is called, was wrought into his habit. He was a *slave* to it, and to what he called *freedom*. He was deemed one of the best companions among men, and one of the gallantest men among women. His advantages of person and mind were snares to him. Mrs. Oldham was not the only one of her sex with whom he was intimate: he had another mistress in town, who had a taste for all its gaieties, and who even assumed his name.

He would now-and-then, by way of excursion, and to surprise the young ladies, visit Grandison-

hall; but though it was once the seat he most delighted in, neither gave, nor seemed to receive, much pleasure there; hurrying away on a sudden, as if he had escaped from it; though never father had more reason to be pleased with the conduct and duty of daughters: and this he often declared, boasting of them in their absence; but snubbing, chiding, and studying to find fault with them, when present.

But what equally surprised and affected them, was, that his son had not been a year abroad, when he prohibited them to write to, or correspond with, him; and, by their brother's discontinuing to write to them, from about the same time, they supposed that he was under the same prohibition: and so, it seems, he was.

They presumed, their father's reason for this unkind prohibition was, his fear that his gaieties would have been one of the subjects of the correspondence; and the rather, as those gaieties were so likely to affect all three in their fortunes.

The young ladies, however, for some time, continued writing to their brother. Miss Grandison, in mentioning this, said, in her usual sprightly manner, that she never had any notion of obeying unreasonable commands; commands so evidently unreasonable as to be unnatural; and she called upon me to justify her in her notion. The countess also desired me to speak my mind on this subject.

I am apprehensive, said I, of children's *partiality* in this respect: if they make themselves their own judges in the performance or non-performance of a duty, *inclination*, I am afraid, will too often be their guide, rather than right reason. They will be too apt, perhaps, to call those commands unnatural, which are not *so* unnatural as this seems to be.

But, Harriet, said Miss Grandison, would not you have written on, in the like circumstances?

I believe not, replied I; and partly for this reason, because I should have had no doubt but my brother would have the same prohibition; and I should only have shewn my brother, as well as my father (were my father to know it) an instance of my refractoriness without obtaining the desired end; or, if my brother had written, I should have made him a partaker in my fault.

Your answer regards the policy of the thing, Harriet, said Miss Grandison: but ought an unnatural command—

There she stopt: yet by her looks expected me to speak.

I should have thought it hard; but that it was more meritorious to submit, than the contrary. I believe I should have supposed, that my father might have reasons which might not appear to me. But, pray, ladies, how did your brother—

O, he was implicit—

Will you forgive me, ladies?—I should have been concerned, I think, that my brother, in a point of duty, though it were one that might be *disputable*, should be more *nice*, more *delicate*, than his sister.

Miss Emily looked as if she were pleased with me.

Well, you are a good girl, a *very* good girl, said Miss Grandison: *that*, whether your doctrine be just or not, is out of dispute.

This prohibition gave the sisters the more sensible concern, as they were afraid it would lay a foundation for distance and indifference in their brother to them; on whom, as their mother had presaged, they were likely, if he survived their father, to have a too great dependence; but more particularly at that time, as their brother had promised, at his taking leave of them, to write a regular account of all that befel him, and of all that was curious, and worthy notice, in the courts and places he visited; and

had actually begun to do so; and as he had asked their advice in relation to his governor, who proved not so proper a person for that employment, as was expected; and to which they had answered, without knowing, for some time, what was the resolution he took.

They asked their father from time to time, after the welfare of their brother. He would answer them with pleasure, and sometimes with tears in his eyes, He is all that is *dutiful*, *brave*, *pious*, *worthy*: and would sometimes add, *God reward him!* I *cannot*. But when he mentioned the word *dutiful*, he would look at them, as if he had in his thoughts their resisting him in his intention of reinstating their governess; the only time they could recollect, that they had given him the shadow of displeasure.

The ladies went on, and said, that Sir Thomas, in all companies, gloried in his son. And once Lord W. who himself, on his lady's death, openly indulged himself in liberties which before he was only suspected to take [O my Lucy! how rare a character, in this age, is that of a virtuous man!] told some gentlemen, who wondered that Sir Thomas Grandison could permit a son so beloved to be absent from him so many years, that the reason Sir Thomas gave, was, that his son's morals and his own were so different, that he should not be able to bear his own consciousness, if he consented to his return to England. The unhappy man was so habituated to vice, that he could talk familiarly of his gaieties to his intimates, seeming to think them too well known for him to endeavour to conceal them; but, however, would add sometimes, I intend to set about altering my course of life; and then will I send for my son. But, alas! Sir Thomas went on from year to year, only *intending*: he lived not to begin the promised *alteration*, nor to see his son.

Yet one awakener he had, that made him talk of beginning the alteration of his way of living immediately, and of sending for his son; which last act was to be the forerunner of his reformation.

It happened, that Mrs. Farnborough, the woman he lived with when in town, was struck with the small-pox, in the height of her gaiety and pleasure; for she was taken ill at the opera, on seeing a lady of her acquaintance there, whose face bore too strongly the marks of the distemper, and who, it seems, had made her first visit to that place, rather than to a better. The malady, aided by her terror, proved mortal; and Sir Thomas was so much affected with the warning, that he left town, and, in pursuance of his temporary good resolutions, went down to his daughters; talked of sending for his son; and, for some few months, lived like the man of sense and understanding he was known to be.

LETTER XIV.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Lord L. returned from his travels about the time that Mrs. Farnborough was taken ill. He had brought some presents to Sir Thomas from his son, who took all opportunities to send him over curiosities, some of considerable value; which served at the same time to shew his œconomy and his duty. He forgot not, in this way, his sisters, though his accompanying letters were short, and merely polite, and such as required no other answer than thanks: only they could discover by them, that he had warm wishes to be allowed to return to

England ;*but such a submission to his father's pleasure, as entirely to give up his own.

Sir Thomas seemed fond of Lord L.: and setting out on Mrs. Farnborough's death, for Grandison-hall, gave him an invitation to visit him there; for he would listen with pleasure, an hour together, to him, or to any one, who would talk, and give him some account of his son. How predominant must those passions, those habits, be in his heart, which could take place of a love so laudably paternal!

In pursuance of this invitation, Lord L. attended him at the Hall; and there fell in love with the eldest of the young ladies. He revealed his passion to her. She referred herself wholly to her father. Sir Thomas could not be blind to their mutual affection. Every-body saw it. Lord L.'s passion was of the ardent kind; and he was too honest to wish to conceal it. But yet Sir Thomas would not see it. He behaved, however, with great freedom and civility to my lord; so that the heart of the young lady was insensibly engaged; but Sir Thomas avoided several opportunities which the lover had laid in wait for, to open his mind, and make proposals.

At last, my lord desired an audience of Sir Thomas, as upon a subject of the last importance. The baronet, after some little delays, and not without some inauspicious reluctance, granted it: and then my lord revealed his passion to him.

Sir Thomas asked him, if he had made it known to his daughter? and yet must have seen, on an hundred occasions, at breakfast, at dinner, at tea, at supper, how matters stood with both the lovers, if Miss Grandison's pleasant account of the matter may be depended upon.

Lord L. owned he had; and that he had asked her

leave to make proposals to her father, to whom she wholly referred herself.

Sir Thomas seemed uneasy; and oddly answered, he was sorry for it: he wished his lordship had not put such notions in the girl's head. Both his daughters would now be set a romancing, he supposed. They were, till now, modest young creatures, he said. Young women should not too soon be set to look out of themselves for happiness—He had known many quiet and orderly girls set a madding by the notice of men. He did not know what business young fellows had to find out qualifications in other men's daughters, that the parents of those daughters had not given themselves leisure to discover. A daughter of *his*, he hoped, had not encouraged such discoveries. It was to him but as *yesterday*, when they were crowing in the arms of their nurses; and now, he supposed, they would be set a crowing after wedlock.

What an *odd* father was Sir Thomas, my Lucy! His own life, it is evident, had passed away very pleasantly.

Indeed he could hardly bear to think, he added, of either of his daughters as marriageable yet. They have not been nursed in the town hot-beds, my lord. They are sober country-girls, and good housewives. I love not that girls should marry before they have done growing. A young wife makes a vapourish mother. I forget their age—But twenty-six, or twenty-eight, is time enough for a woman, either for the sake of modesty or discretion, to marry.

We may like *gay* men for *husbands*, Lucy: some of us do: but, at this rate, those daughters must be very good girls, who can make their best courtesies to their mothers, and thank them for their *fancies*; or the fathers must be more attentive to their growth

than Sir Thomas was to that of *his* daughters.— What have I said?—I am here afraid of my uncle.

My lord was surprised; and well he might. Sir Thomas had forgot, as Lady L. observed, that he himself thought Miss *W.* was not too young at seventeen, to be *Lady Grandison*.

My lord was a modest man: he was begging (as it may be called) the young woman, whom of all the women in the world he loved best, of her father, who was a man that knew the world, and had long made a considerable figure in it; and who, for reasons which would have held with him had he lived to see her *forty*, had no mind to part with her. Yet my lord pleaded his passion, her great and good qualities, as acknowledged by himself; and modestly hinted at the unexceptionableness of his own character, and the favour he stood in with his son; not saying the least word of his birth and alliances, which some lovers, of his rank, would not have forgot: and, it seems, he was right in forbearing to make these accidents a plea; for Sir Thomas valued himself upon his ancestry; and used to say, that his progenitor, in James the First's time, disgraced it by accepting of the title of baronet.

Sir Thomas allowed something to the plea of his standing well with his son: Let me tell you, my lord, said he, that I shall take no step in a family-affair of this consequence, without consulting with my son; and the rather, as he is far from expecting so much of my consideration for him. He is the pride of my life.

My lord desired, that his suit might be put upon the issue of his son's approbation.

But pray, my lord, what fortune do you expect with my girl? Well as you love her, I suppose the return of her love for yours, which you seem not to doubt, will not be enough. Can the poor girl be a

countess without a confounded parcel of dross fastened to her petticoat, to make her weight in the other scale?

My circumstances, said my honest Lord L. permit me not, in discretion, to make that compliment to my love, which my heart would with transport make, were they better: but I will lay them faithfully before you, and be determined by your generosity.

I could not but expect from a young man of your lordship's good sense, such an answer as this: and yet I must tell you, that we fathers, who know the world, expect to make some advantage of a knowledge that has cost us so much. I should not dislike a little more romancing in love, from a man that asks for my daughter, though I care not how little of it is shewn by my son to another man's. Every father *thinks* thus, my lord; but is not so honest as to *own* it.

I am sure, Sir Thomas, that you would not think a man worthy of your daughter, who had no regard to any-thing, but the gratification of his own wishes; who could think, for the sake of that, of involving a young lady in difficulties, which she never knew in her father's house.

Why, this, my lord, is well said. You and I may afford to make handsome compliments to one another, while compliments only are expected. I have a good share of health: I have not quitted the world so entirely, nor think I ought, as to look upon myself as the necessary tool of my children, to promote their happiness at the expence of my own. My lord, I have still a strong relish for the pleasures of this world. My daughters *may* be women grown: your lordship seems to have *found out*, that they *are*; and has persuaded one of them, that she *is*; and the other will be ready to think she is not three years

behind her. This is an inconvenience which you have brought upon me. And as I would be glad to live a little longer for myself, I wish you to withdraw your suit; and leave me to do as well as I *can* with my daughters. I propose to carry them to town next winter. They shall there look about them, and see whom they could like, and who could like them, that they may not be liable to after-repentance, for having taken the first man that offered.

My lord told Sir Thomas, that he hoped there could not be reason to imagine, that any thing could possibly arise from his address, that should be incompatible with the happiness of a father—And was going on in the same reasonable strain; but Sir Thomas interrupted him—

You must not, my lord, suppose I can be a stranger to whatever may be urged by a young man on this subject. You say you are in love; Caroline is a girl that any-body may love: but I have not a mind she should marry so soon. I know the inconvenience of early marriages. A man's children treading upon his heels, and *shouldering him* with their shoulders: in short, my lord, I have an aversion to be called a grandfather, before I am a *grey* father [Sir Thomas was not put to it to try to overcome this aversion]. Girls will start up, and look up, and parents cannot help it: but what father, in the vigour of his days, would not *wish* to help it? I am not fond of their partnership in my substance. Why should I divide my fortune with novices, when, making the handsome allowances to them, that I do make, it is not too much for myself? My son should be their example. He is within a year as old as my eldest girl. On his future alliances I build, and hope to add by them to the consequence of all my family [Ah! Lucy!]. Girls are said to be sooner women than boys are men. Let us see that they are

so by their discretion, as well as by stature.—Let them stay—

And here Sir Thomas abruptly broke off the conversation for that time; to the great distress of Lord L. who had reason to regret, that he had a man of wit, rather than a man of reason, to contend with.

Sir Thomas went directly into his closet, and sent for his two daughters; and, though not ill-naturedly, raillied them both so much on their own *discoveries*, as he wickedly phrased it, and on admitting Lord L. into the secret, that neither of them could hold up her head, for two or three days, *in* his presence. But, *out* of it, Miss Caroline Grandison found that she was in love; and the more for Lord L.'s generous attachment, and Sir Thomas's not so generous discouragement.

My lord wrote over to young Mr. Grandison, to favour his address. Lady L. permitted me to copy the following answer to his application:

MY LORD,

I have the honour of your lordship's letter of the 17th. Never brother loved his sisters better than I do mine. As the natural effects of that love, I receive with pleasure the notification of your great regard for my elder sister. As to myself, I cannot have one objection: but what am I in this case? She is wholly my father's. I also am his. The consideration he gives me in this instance, confounds me: it binds me to him in double duty. It would look like taking advantage of it, were I so much as to offer my humble opinion, unless he were pleased to command it from me. If he does, assure yourself, my lord, that (my sister's inclination in your lordship's favour presupposed) my voice shall be warmly given, as you wish. I am, my lord, with equal affection and esteem,

Your lordship's faithful and obedient servant.

Both sisters rejoiced at the perusal of this affectionate letter; for they were afraid that the unnatural prohibition of correspondence between them and their brother had estranged his affections from them.

The particulars of one more conversation I will give you, between my lord and Sir Thomas, on this important subject; for you must believe, that Lord L. could not permit a matter of such consequence to his own happiness to go easily off; especially as neither of the two daughters was able to stand her father's continual raillery, which had banished from the cautious eyes, and apprehensive countenances of both ladies, all indications of love, though it reigned with the more absolute power in the heart of Miss Caroline, for that concealment.

In this conversation, my lord began with a little more spirit than he finished the former. The countess lent me my lord's minutes of it; which he took for her to see, and to judge of all that passed at the time.

On my lord's lively, but respectful, address to Sir Thomas on this occasion, the baronet went directly into the circumstances of my lord, and his expectations.

Lord L. told him frankly, that he paid interest for 15,000l. for sisters' fortunes; three of whom were living, and single: that he believed two of them would soon be advantageously married; and he should wish to pay them their portions on the day; and was contriving to do so, by increasing the incumbrance that his father had left upon the finest part of his estate, to the amount of 5000l.; which, and his sisters' fortunes, were all that lay upon a clear estate of 5000l. a year. After he had thus opened himself, he referred the whole to Sir Thomas's consideration.

My advice, my lord, is this, said the baronet;

That you should by no means think of marriage till you are clear of the world. You will have 10,000l. to pay directly: you will have the interest of 10,000l. more to pay: and you men of title, on your marriages, whether you like ostentation or not, must be ostentatious. Your equipages, your houses, your furniture—A certain increase of expence.—By no means, my Lord L. think of marriage till you are quite clear of the world, unless you could meet with some rich widow or heiress, who could do the business at once.

Lord L. could only, at first, urge his passion [he durst not his daughter's affection, and the happiness of both, which were at stake]. Sir Thomas opposed discretion to that plea. Poor *passion*, Lucy, would be ashamed to see the sun, if *discretion* were always to be attended to in treaties of this kind.

Afterwards he told Sir Thomas, that he would accept the lady upon his own terms. He besought his consent to their nuptials. He would wait his own time and pleasure. He would be content if he gave not Miss Caroline a single shilling.

Sir Thomas was fretful—And so, lover-like, you would involve the girl you profess to love, in difficulties. I will ask her, if she wants for any-thing with me, that a modest girl can wish for? But, to be serious, it is a *plaguy* thing for a man to be obliged, by the officious *love*, as it is called, of a pretender to his daughters, to open his affairs, and expose his circumstances, to strangers. I wish, my lord, that you had let my girls alone. I wish you had not found them out in their country retirement. I should have carried them to town, as I told you, in a few months. Women so brought up, so qualified, and handsome girls, are such rarities in this age, and men worth having are so affrighted at the luxury and expensiveness of the modern women, that I,

doubted not but the characters of my girls would have made their fortunes, with very little of my help. They have *family*, my lord, to value themselves upon, though but spinsters. And let me tell you, since I shall be thought a more unnatural man than I am, if I do not obey the present demand upon me to open my circumstances, I owe my son a great deal more than 30,000l.

I don't understand you, Sir Thomas.

Why, thus, my lord, I explain myself: my father left me what is called rich. I lessened the ready money which he had got together for a purchase he lived not to complete, a great deal. That I looked upon as a deodand: so was not answerable for it: and as I was not married, my son had no right in it. When I was married, and he was given me—

Forgive me, Sir Thomas: Your son a *right*—And had not your other children—

No, my lord: they were girls—And as to them, had I increased my fortune by penuriousness, instead of living *like a man*, I was determined as to their fortunes—

But as I was saying, when Lady Grandison died, I think (though every father does not; nor should I, were he not the best of sons, and did he *expect* it) the produce of her jointure, which is very considerable, should have been my son's. As to what I annually allowed him, *that* it was my duty to allow him, as my son, and for my own credit, had his mother not brought me a shilling.—Then, my lord, I have been obliged to take up money upon my Irish estate; which being a family-estate, my son ought to have had come clear to him. You see, my lord, how I expose myself.

You have a generous way of thinking, Sir Thomas, as to your son: but a man of your spirit would despise me, if I did not *say*, that—

I have not so generous a way of thinking for my daughters—I will save your lordship the trouble of speaking out, because it is more agreeable from myself than it would be for any other man to do it. But to this I answer, that the late Earl of L. your lordship's father, had one son and three daughters—I have one son, and two. He was an earl—I am but a simple baronet—If 5000l. apiece is enough for an earl's daughters, half the sum ought to do for a baronet's.

Your fortune, Sir Thomas—And in England, where estates—

And where living, my lord, will be five times more expensive to you than it need to be, if you can content yourself to live where your estate lies.—As for me, I have lived nobly—But had I been as rich as my father left me, 5000l. should have done with a daughter, I assure you. You, my lord, have *your* notions: I have *mine*. Money and a girl you expect from me: I ask nothing of you. As matters stand, if my girls will *keep* (and I hope they will) I intend to make as good a bargain for them, and with them, as I can. Not near 5000l. apiece must they expect from me. I will not rob my son more than I *have* done.—See, here is a letter from him. It is an answer to one I had written, on the refusal of a wretch to lend me, upon my Irish estate, a sum that I wanted to answer a debt of honour, which I had contracted at Newmarket, unless my son (though it is an estate *in fee*) would join in the security. Does not such a son as this deserve every thing?

I obtained a sight of this letter; and here is a copy:

HONOURED SIR,

I could almost say I am sorry that so superior a spirit as yours should vouchsafe to comply with Mr.

O.'s disagreeable and *unnecessary* demand. But, at least, let me ask, why, Sir, did you condescend to write to me on the occasion, as if for my consent? Why did you not send me the deeds, ready to sign? Let me beg of you, ever-dear and ever-honoured Sir, that you will not suffer any difficulties, that I can join to remove, to oppress your heart with doubts for one moment. Are you not my *father*?—And did you not give me a mother, whose memory is my glory? That *I am*, under God, is owing to you. That I am *what I am*, to your indulgence. Leave me not any-thing! You have given me an education, and I derive from you a spirit, that, by God's blessing on my duty to you, will enable me to make my own fortune: and, in that case, the foundation of it will be yours; and you will be intitled, for that foundation, to my warmest gratitude. Permit me, Sir, to add, that, be my income ever so small, I am resolved to live within it. And let me beseech you to remit me but one half of your present bounty. My reputation is established; and I will engage not to discredit my father. All I have ever aimed at, is, to be in condition rather to lay, than to receive, an obligation. *That* your goodness has always enabled me to do: and I am rich, through your munificence; richer, in your favour.

Have you any thoughts, Sir, of commanding me to attend you at Paris, or at the Hague; according to the hopes you gave me in your last?—I will not, if you do me this honour, *press* for a return with you to my native country: but I long to throw myself at your feet; and, wherever the opportunity of that happiness shall be given me, to assure you personally of the inviolable duty of your

CHARLES GRANDISON.

Must not such a letter as this, Lucy, have stung

to the heart a man of Sir Thomas Grandison's pride? If not, what *was* his pride?—Sir Thomas had as good an education as his son: yet could not live within the compass of an income of upwards of 7000l. a-year. His son called himself rich with 800l. or 1000l. a-year; and though abroad, in foreign countries, desired but half that allowance, that he might contribute, by the other half, to lessen the difficulties in which his father had involved himself by his extravagance.

His father, Lady L. says, *was* affected with it. He wept: he blessed his son; and resolved, for his sake, to be more cautious in his wagerings than he had hitherto been. Policy, therefore, would have justified the young gentleman's cheerful compliance, had he *not* been guided by superior motives. Sir Charles would not, I think one may be sure, have sacrificed to the unreasonable desires even of a father, the fortune to which he had an unquestionable right: an excess of generosity, amiable indeed, but pitiable, as contrary to the justice that every man owes to himself, and to those who hereafter may depend upon him; and what I have often heard my grandmamma lament in the instance of the worthy Mr. M. whose family has suffered from an acquiescence with a father's extravagance, for which *that* father was only the more wretched.

Sir Charles's is the true, the reasonable virtue, that keeps clear of every extreme.—O my dear! the Christian religion is a blessed religion! How does honest policy, as well as true greatness of mind, recommend that noble doctrine of returning good for evil!

LETTER XV.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

My lord *repeated* his request, that he might have Sir Thomas's consent to his nuptials, upon his own terms; and promised never to expect a single shilling in dowry, but to leave the whole of that to time, and to his own convenience and pleasure.

We know, said Sir Thomas, what all this means. You talk, my lord, like a young man. You ought not to think (you once said it yourself) of involving a young woman you love, as well as yourself, in difficulties. I know the world, and what is best to be done, if you will think no more of my daughter. I hope she has discretion. *First love* is generally *first folly*. It is seldom *fit* to be encouraged. Your quality, my lord, to say nothing of your merit, will procure you a rich wife from the city. And the city now is as genteel, as polite, as the court was formerly. The wives and daughters of citizens, poor fellows! are apes of us gentry; and succeed pretty well, as to outward appearance, in the mimicry. You will, by this means, shake off all your father's sins. I speak in the language of young fellows, who expect a father to live solely for them, and not for himself. Some sober young men of quality and fortune, affrighted at the gaiety and extravagance of the modern women, will find out my girls: who, I hope, will have patience. If they have not, let them pursue their inclinations; let them take their *fill of love*, as Solomon says; and if they run their heads into a hedge, let them stick there by the horns, with all my heart!

See, my dear, what a man a rakish father is!—O

my good Lady Grandison, how might your choice have punished your children!

I pray to God, Sir Thomas, said my lord, bowing, but angry; I pray to God, to continue me in a different way of thinking from yours, if this *be* yours. Give me leave to say, you are too young a gentleman to be a father of grown-up children. But I must love Miss Grandison; and still, if possible, poor young lady! more than ever, for what has passed in this conversation. And saying this, he withdrew.

Sir Thomas was very angry at this spirited speech. He sent for his daughter, and forbad her to receive my lord's addresses. He ordered her never to think of him: and directing Miss Charlotte to be called in, repeated his commands before her; and threatened to turn them both out of his house, if they presumed to encourage any address, but with his knowledge. And don't think, said he, of going on to *engage your affections*, as a sensual forwardness is called, and then hope to take advantage of *my* weakness, to countenance *your own*. I know the world: I know your sex.—Your sister, I see, Charlotte, is a whining fool: see how she whimpers!—Begone from my presence, Caroline! And remember, Charlotte (for I suppose this impertinent lord's address to your sister will go near to set you agog) that I expect, whether absent or present, to know of any application that may be made to you, before your liking has taken root in *love*, as it is called, and while my advice may have the weight that the permission or dissent of a father ought to have.

They both wept, courtesied, and withdrew.

At dinner, Miss Caroline begged to be excused attending her gay and arbitrary father; being excessively grieved, and unfit, as she desired her sister to say, to be seen. But he commanded her attendance.

Miss Charlotte Grandison told me what this wicked man [Shall I call Sir Charles Grandison's father so?] said on the occasion: "Women's tears are but, as the poet says, the sweat of eyes. Caroline's eyes will not misbecome them. The more she is ashamed of herself, the less reason will she give me to be ashamed of her. Let me see how the fool looks, now she is conscious of her folly. Her bashful behaviour will be a half-confession; and this is the first step to amendment. Tell her, that a woman's grief for not having been able to carry her point, has always been a pleasure to me. I will not be robbed of my pleasure. She owes it me for the pain she has given me."

Lord L. and she had parted. He had, on his knees, implored her hand. He would not, he said, either ask or expect a shilling of her father: his estate would and should work itself clear, without injury to his sisters, or postponing their marriage. Her prudence and generosity he built upon: they would enable him to be just to every one, and to preserve his own credit. He would not, he generously said, for the beloved daughter's sake, utter one reflecting word upon her father, after he had laid naked facts before her. Those, however, would too well justify him, if he did. And he again urged for her hand, and for a private marriage. Can I bear to think with patience, my dearest Miss Grandison, added he, that you and your sister, according to Sir Thomas's scheme, shall be carried to town, with minds nobler than the minds of any women in it, as adventurers, as *female* fortune-hunters, to take the chance of attracting the eyes and hearts of men, whether worthy or unworthy, purely to save your father's pocket? No, madam: believe me, I love you not for my own sake merely, though heaven knows you are dearer to me than my life,

but for yours as well: and my whole future conduct shall convince you, that I do. My love, madam, has *friendship* for its base; and your worthy brother, once, in an argument, convinced me, that *love* might be selfish: that *friendship* could not; and that in a pure flame they could not be disunited; and when they were, that love was a cover only to a baseness of heart, which taught the pretender to it to seek to gratify his own passion, at the expence of the happiness or duty of the object pretended to be beloved.

See, my Lucy!—Did we girls ever think of this nice, but just, distinction before? And is not *friendship* a nobler band than *love*?—But *is* not Lord L. a good man? Don't you love him, Lucy?—Why have I not met with these notions before in the men I have known?

But Miss Caroline was not less generous than my Lord L. No scheme of my father's shall make me forget, said she, the merits of Lord L. Your lordship's affairs will be made easier by time. I will not embarrass you. Think not yourself under any obligation to me. Whenever any opportunity offers to make you easy all at once (for a mind so generous ought not to be laid under difficulties) embrace it: only let me look upon you as my *frind*, till envy to a happier woman, or other unworthiness in Caroline Grandison, make me forfeit your good opinion.

Generous creature! said my lord. Never will I think of any other wife while you are single. Yet will I not fetter *her*, who would leave *me* free.—May I, madam, hope, if you will not bless me with your hand now, that my letters will be received?—Your father, in forbidding my address to you, has forbidden me his house. He is, and ought to be, master in it.—May I hope, madam, a correspondence—

I am unhappy, said she, that, having such a brother as sister never had, I cannot consult him. The dear

Charlotte is too partial to me, and too apt to think of what may be her own case. But, my lord, I depend upon your honour, which you have never given me reason to doubt, that you will not put me upon doing a wrong thing, either with regard to my duty to my father, or to my own character. Try me not with a view to see the power you have over me. That would be ungenerous. I own you have some: indeed a great deal.

LETTER XVI.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Tuesday night.

You may guess what were my lord's assurances on this generous confidence in him. They agreed upon a private correspondence by letters.—Ah! Lady L. was this *quite* right, though it came out happily in the event? Does not concealment always imply somewhat wrong? Ought you not to have done *your* duty, whether your father did *his*, or not? Were you not *called upon*, as I may say, to a *trial of yours*? And is not virtue to be proved by trial? Remember you not who says, "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."—But you, Lady L. lost your excellent mother very early.

The worthy young lady would not, however, be prevailed upon to consent to a private marriage; and my lord took leave of her. Their parting was extremely tender; and the amiable Caroline, in the softness of her heart, overcome by my lord's protestations of everlasting love to her in preference to all

the women on earth, voluntarily assured him, that she never would receive any other proposal, while he was living, and single.

Sir Thomas shewed himself so much displeased with Lord L. for the freedom of his last speech, that my lord chose not to desire another audience of him; and yet, being unwilling to widen the difference, he took polite leave of the angry baronet in a letter, which was put into his hands just before he had commanded Miss Caroline to attend him at dinner, which she had begged to be excused doing.

Don't you pity the young lady, Lucy, in this situation? Lord L. having but a little before taken leave of her, and set out for London.

Miss Charlotte told her sister, that, were it she, she should hardly have suffered Lord L. to go away by *himself*—Were it but to avoid an interview with a father who seemed to have been too much used to women's tears to be moved by them; and who had such a satirical vein, and such odd notions of love.

I was very earnest to know what passed at this dinner-time.

Miss Grandison said, It is best for *me* to answer Miss Byron's curiosity, I believe: as I was a stander-by, and only my father and sister were the players.

Players! repeated Lady L.—It was a cruel scene. And I believe, Miss Byron, it will make you not wonder, that I liked Lord L. much the better for being rather a man of understanding than a man of wit.

Miss Grandison began as follows:

I went up with my father's *peremptory*, as I may call it, to my sister.

O my dear mamma! said Caroline, when she found she must go down, on what a new occasion do I want your sweet mediation! But, Charlotte, I can neither *walk* nor *stand*—

You must then lean upon me, my dear, and *creep:* love will creep, they say, where it cannot go.

Wicked girl! interrupted Lady L. I remember that was what she said.

I said it to make you smile, if I could, and take courage: but you know I was in tears for you, notwithstanding.

You thought of what might befal yourself, Charlotte.

So I did. We never, I believe, *properly* feel for others, what does not touch ourselves.

A compassionate heart, said I, is a blessing, though a painful one: and yet there would be no supporting life, if we felt quite as poignantly for others as we do for ourselves. How happy was it for my Charlotte, that she could smile, when the father's apprehended lecture was intended for the use of both!

I thank you for this, Harriet. You will not be long my creditor—But I will proceed.

Caroline took my advice. She leaned upon me; and creep, creep, creep, down she *crept*. A fresh stream of tears fell from her eyes, when she came to the dining-room door: her tremblings were increased: and down she dropt upon a window-seat in the passage: I can go no further, said she.

Instantly a voice, that we knew must be observed, alarmed our ears—Where are you, Caroline! Charlotte? Girls! where are you? The housekeeper was in hearing, and ran to us: Ladies! Ladies! Your papa calls!—And we, in spite of the weakness of the one, and the unwillingness of the other, recovered our feet; and, after half a dozen creeping motions more, found ourselves within the door, and in our father's sight, my sister leaning upon my arm.

What devil's in the wind now! What tragedy-movements are here!—What measured steps!—In some cases, all women are natural actresses. But

come, Caroline, the play is over, and you mistake your cue.

Good Sir!—Her hands held up—I wept for her; and for my own remoter case, if you will, Miss Byron.

The prologue is yours, Caroline. Charlotte, I doubt not, is ready with her epilogue. But come, come, it is time to close this farce—Take your places, girls; and don't be fools.—A pretty caution, thought I, said Miss Charlotte, when you make us both such!

However, the servants entering with the dinner, we hemmed, handkerchief'd, twinkled, took up our knives and forks, laid them down, and took them up again, when our father's eye was upon us; piddled, sipped; but were more busy with our forks than with our teeth. As for poor sister Caroline, love stuck in her throat. She tried to swallow, as one in a quinsey; a wry face, and a strained neck, denoting her difficulty to get down but a lark's morsel—And what made her more awkward (I am sure it did me) was a pair of the sharpest eyes that ever were seen in a man's head, and the man a father (the poor things having no mother, no aunt, to support their spirits) cast first on the one, then on the other; and now-and-then an overclouded brow, adding to our awkwardness: yet still more apprehensive of dinner-time being over, and the withdrawing of the servants.

The servants loved their young ladies. They attended with very serious faces; and seemed glad when they were dismissed.

Then it was that Caroline arose from her seat, made her courtesy, awkwardly enough; with the air of a boarding-school miss, her hands before her.

My father let her make her honours, and go to the door, I rising to attend her; but then called her back; I dare say, on purpose, to enjoy her awkwardness, and to punish her.

Who bid you go? Whither are you going, Caro-

fine? Come back, Charlotte.—But it will be always thus: a father's company is despised, when a girl gets a lover into her head. Fine encouragement for a father, to countenance a passion that shall give himself but a second or third place, who once had a first, in his children's affections! But I shall have reason to think myself fortunate, perhaps, if my children do not look upon me as their enemy.—Come back when I bid you.

We crept back more awkwardly than we went from table.

Sit down—We crossed our hands, and stood like a couple of fools.

Sit down when I bid you. You are confoundedly humble. I want to talk with you.

Down sat the two simpletons, on the edge of their chairs; their faces and necks averted.

Miss Grandison then gave the following dialogue. She humorously, by her voice (an humble one for her sister, a less meek one for herself, an imperious one for Sir Thomas) marked the speakers. I will prefix their names.

Sir Thomas. What sort of leave has Lord L. taken of you, Caroline? He has sent *me* a letter Has he sent *you* one? I hope he did not think a personal leave due to the daughter, and not to the father.

Charlotte. He thought you were angry with him, Sir, said I [poor Caroline's answer was not ready],

Sir Tho. And supposed that your sister was *not*. Very well! What leave did he take of you, girl? woman? What do you call yourself?

Charlotte. Sir, my Lord L. I dare say, intended no disrespect to—

I might as well have been silent, Harriet.

Sir Tho. I like not your preface, girl, interrupted he—Tell me not what *you* dare say. I spoke to your sister.—Come, sit upright. None of your averted

faces, and wry necks. A little more innocence in your hearts, and you'll have less shame in your countenances. I see what a league there is between you. A promising prospect before me, with you *both!* But tell me, Caroline, do you love Lord L.? Have you given him hope that you will be his, when you can get the cross father to change his mind; or, what is still better, out of your way for ever? All fathers are plaguy ill-natured, when they do not think of their girls' fellows, as their foolish girls think of them! Answer me, Caroline!

Caroline (weeping, at his severe speech). What can I say, Sir, and not displease you?

Sir Tho. What!—Why, that you are all obedience to your father. Cannot you say *that?* Sure you can say *that.*

Car. I hope, Sir—

Sir Tho. And I *hope* too. But it becomes you to be *certain.* Can't you answer for your own heart?

Car. I believe you think, Sir, that Lord L. is not an unworthy man.

Sir Tho. A man is not more worthy, for making my daughter forget herself, and behave like a fool to her father.

Car. I may behave like a fool, Sir, but not undutifully. You frighten me, Sir. I am unable to hold up my head before you, when you are angry with me.

Sir Tho. Tell me that you have broken with Lord L. as I have commanded you. Tell me, that you will never see him more, if you can avoid it. Tell me, that you will not write to him—

Car. Pardon me, Sir, for saying, that Lord L.'s behaviour to me has been ever uniformly respectful: he reveres my papa too: how can I treat him with disrespect?—

Sir Tho. So! I shall have it all out, presently—Go,

on, girl—And do you, Charlotte, attend to the lesson set you by your elder sister.

Char. Indeed, Sir, I can answer for the goodness of my sister's heart, and for her duty to you.

Sir Tho. Well said! Now, Caroline, do you speak up for Charlotte's heart: one good turn deserves another. But say what you will for each other, I will be my own judge of both your hearts; and facts shall be the test. Do you know, Caroline, whether Charlotte has any lover that is to keep you in countenance with yours?

Car. I dare say, Sir, that my sister Charlotte will not disoblige you.

Sir Tho. I hope, Caroline, you can say as much for Charlotte's sister.

Car. I hope I can, Sir.

Sir Tho. Then you know my will.

Car. I presume, Sir, it is your pleasure, that I should always remain single.

Sir Tho. Hey-day!—But why, pray, does your ladyship suppose so?—Speak out.

Car. Because I think, forgive me to say it, that my Lord L.'s character and his quality are such, that a more creditable proposal cannot be expected.—Pray, Sir, forgive me. And she held up her hands, pray—pray-fashion, thus—

Well said, Caroline! thought I—Pull up a courage, my dear!—What a deuce—

Sir Tho. His quality!—Gewgaw!—What is a Scottish peerage!—And does your silly heart beat after a coronet? You want to be a countess, do you?—But let me tell you, that if you have a *true* value for Lord L. you will not, incumbered as he is with sisters' fortunes, wish him to marry you.

Car. As to title, Sir, that is of very little account with me, without the good character.—As to prudence; my Lord L. cannot see any-thing in me to forfeit his prudence for.

Well answered, Caroline! thought I, again said Miss Grandison. In such a laudable choice, all should not be left upon the poor *lov-yer!*

Sir Tho. So the difficulty lies not with *you*, I find. *You* have no objection to Lord L. if he has none to you. You are an humbled and mortified girl, then. The woman must be indeed in love, who, once thinking well of herself, can give a preference against herself to her lover.

What business had Sir Thomas to say this, my Lucy?

Sir Tho. Let me know, Caroline, what hopes you have given to Lord L.—Or rather, perhaps, what hopes he has given *you*?—Why are you silent? Answer me, girl.

Car. I hope, Sir, I shall not disgrace my father, in thinking well of Lord L.

Sir Tho. Nor will he disgrace himself, proud as are the Scottish beggars of their ancestry, in thinking well of a daughter of mine.

Car. Lord L. though not a beggar, Sir, would think it an honour, Sir—

Sir Tho. Well said! Go on: go on. Why stops the girl?—And so he *ought*. But if Lord L. is not a beggar for my daughter, let not my daughter be a beggar for Lord L. But Lord L. would think it an honour, you say—To be what? Your husband, I suppose. Answer my question; How stand matters between you and Lord L.?

Car. I cannot, such is my unhappiness! say any thing that will please my father.

Sir Tho. How the girl evades my question!—Don't let me repeat it.

Car. It is not disgraceful, I hope, to own, that I had rather be—

There she stopt, and half-hid her face in her bosom. And I thought, said Miss Grandison, that she never looked prettier in her life.

Sir Tho. Rather be Lord L.'s wife than my daughter—Well, Charlotte, tell me, when are *you* to begin to estrange me from your affections? When are *you* to begin to think your father stands in the way of your happiness? When do *you* cast your purveying eyes upon a mere stranger, and prefer him to your father?—I have done my part, I suppose; I have nothing to do but to allot you the fortunes that your lovers, as they are called, will tell you are necessary to their affairs, and then to lie down and die. Your fellows then, with you, will dance over my grave; and I shall be no more remembered, than if I had never been—except by your brother.

I could not help speaking here, said Miss Grandison. O Sir! how you wound me! Do all fathers—Forgive me, Sir—

I saw his brow begin to lour.

Sir Tho. I bear not impertinence. I bear not—There he stopt in wrath.—But why, Caroline, do you evade my question? You know it. Answer it.

Car. I should be unworthy of the affection of such a man as Lord L. is, if I disowned my esteem for him. Indeed, Sir, I have an esteem for Lord L. above any man I ever saw. You, Sir, did not *always* disesteem him—My brother—

Sir Tho. So! Now all is out!—You have the forwardness—What shall I call it?—But I did, and I do, esteem Lord L.—But as what?—Not as a son-in-law. He came to me as my son's friend. I invited him down in that character: he, at that time, knew nothing of you. But no sooner came a single man into a single woman's company, but you both wanted to make a match of it. You were dutiful: and he was prudent: prudent for himself. I think you talked of his prudence a-while ago. He made his application to you, or you to him, I know not which—[Then how poor Caroline wept! And I,

said Miss Charlotte, could hardly forbear saying *Barbarous!*] And when he found himself sure of you, then was the fool the father to be consulted: and for what? Only to know what he would do for two people, who had left him no option in the case. And this is the trick of you all: and the poor father is to be passive, or else to be accounted a tyrant.

Car. Sir, I admitted not Lord L.'s address, but conditionally, as you should approve of it. Lord L. desired not my approbation upon other terms.

Sir Tho. What nonsense is this?—Have you left me any way to help myself?—Come, Caroline, let me try you. I intend to carry you up to town: a young man of quality has made overtures to me. I believe I shall approve of his proposals. I am sure you will, if you are not prepossessed. Tell me, Are you, have you left yourself at liberty to give way to my recommendation?—Why don't you answer me?—You know, that you received Lord L.'s addresses *but conditionally, as I should approve of them.* And your spark desired not your approbation upon other terms. Come, what say you to this?—What! are you confounded?—Well you may, if you cannot answer me as I wish! If you can, why don't you?—You see, I put you but to your own test.

Car. Sir, it is not for me to argue with my father. Surely, I have not *intended* to be undutiful. Surely, I have not disgraced my family, by admitting Lord L.'s conditional—

Sir Tho. *Conditional!*—Fool!—How conditional!—Is it not absolute, as to the exclusion of me, or of my option? But I have ever found, that the man who condescends to argue with a woman, especially on certain points, in which *nature*, and not reason, is concerned, must follow her through a thousand windings, and find himself farthest off when he imagines himself nearest; and at last must content

self, panting for breath, to sit down where he set out; while she gambols about, and is ready to lead him a new course.

Car. I hope—

Sir Tho. None of your hopes—I will have certainty. May I—Come, I'll bring you to a point, if I can, woman as you are—May I receive proposals for you from any other man? Answer me, Yes or No. Don't deal with me, as girls do with *common* fathers—Don't be disobedient, and then depend upon my weakness to forgive you. I am no *common* father. I know the world. I know your sex. I have *found* more fools in it than I have *made.*—Indeed, no man makes, or needs to make, you fools. You have folly deep-rooted within you. That weed is a native of the soil. A very little watering will make it sprout, and choak the noble flowers that education has planted. I never knew a woman in my life, that was wise by the experience of other people. But answer me: say—Can you receive a new proposal? or can you not?

Caroline answered only by her tears.

Sir Tho. Damnably *constant,* I suppose!—So you give up real virtue, give up duty to a *father,* for fidelity, for constancy, for a fictitious virtue, to a *lover!* Come hither to me, girl!—Why don't you come to me when I bid you?—

LETTER XVII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Miss Caroline arose: four creeping steps, her handkerchief at her eyes, brought her within her father's reach. He snatched her hand, quickened her pace,

and brought her close to his knees. Poor sister Caroline! thought I: O the *ty*— And I had like, at the time, to have added the syllable *rant* to myself. —He pulled the other hand from her eye. The handkerchief dropt: he might see that it was wet and heavy with her tears. Fain would she have turned her blubbered eye from him. He held both her hands, and burst out into a laugh—

And what cries the girl for? Why, Caroline, you *shall* have a husband, I tell you. I will hasten with you to the London market. Will you be offered at Ranelagh market first? the concert or breakfasting? —Or shall I shew you at the opera, or at the play? Ha, ha, hah!—Hold up your head, my amorous girl! You shall stick some of your mother's jewels in your hair, and in your bosom, to draw the eyes of fellows. You must strike at once, while your face is new; or you will be mingled with the herd of women, who prostitute their faces at every polite place. Sweet impatient soul!—Look at me, Caroline. Then he laughed again.

Car. Indeed, Sir, if you were not my father— Well said, Caroline! thought I; and trod on her toe.

Sir Tho. Hey-day! But what then?

Car. I would say you are very cruel.

Sir Tho. And is that all you would say, poor soft thing! in such circumstances, to any *other* man? Well, but, all this time, you don't tell me (still holding her hands) whether any other man will not do as well as your Scots-man?

Car. I am not kindly used. Indeed, Sir, you don't use me kindly. I hope I am *not* an *amorous* creature, as you call me. I am *not* in haste to be married. I am willing to wait your time, your pleasure: but, as I presume, that there can be no objection to Lord L. I wish not to be carried to any *London market.*

Sir Tho. (gravely). If I am disposed to railly you, Caroline; if I am willing to pass off, in a pleasant manner, a forwardness that I did not expect in my daughter; and for which, in my heart, I have despised the daughters of other men, though I have not told the wenches so; I will not be answered pertly. I will not have you forget yourself.

Car. (courtesying). Good Sir, permit me to withdraw. I will recollect myself, and be sorry—

Sir Tho. And is it necessary for you to withdraw, to recollect your *duty?*—But you shall answer my question—How stand you and Lord L.? Are you resolved to have him, and none other?—Will you wait for him, will he wait for you, till death has numbered me with my ancestors?

Car. O Sir! And she looked down after her dropt handkerchief. She wanted it; and would have withdrawn one of her hands to reach it; and when she could not, the big tears running down her cheeks [yet she looked pretty] down she dropt on her knees. —Forgive me, Sir—I dread your displeasure—But must say, that I am not an *amorous* girl: and, to convince you that I am not, I will never marry any man living, if it be not Lord L.

I all this time was in agitations for my poor sister. I tired three chairs; and now looked at her; now from her; then at my fingers' ends, wishing them claws, and the man a *husband*, instead of a father. Indeed, Miss Byron, I could not but make Caroline's treatment my own; and, in fancy, not so very remote, as you imagined, Lady L. Once I said to myself, If some Lord L. tenders himself to me, and I like him, I will not stand all this. The first moonlight night, if he urge me heartily, and if I am sure the parson is ready, I will be under another protection, despicably as I have always thought of run-

away daughters!—Should I have done right, Miss Byron?

The *example,* Miss Grandison! replied I—Such a mother as you were blessed with! The world that would have sat in judgment upon the flight of the daughter, would not have known the cruel treatment of the father. I believe, my dear, you are glad you had not the trial: and you see how Lady L. is rewarded for her patient duty.

That's my good Harriet! said Lady L. I love you for your answer. But, sister, you leave me in too much distress. You must release me from my knees, and send me up to my chamber, as fast as you can.

A little patience, Lady L.—But what say my minutes?—Miss Byron seems all attention. This is a new subject to her. She never had any-body to controul her.

I think I could have borne any-thing from a father or mother, said I, had it pleased God to continue to me so dear a blessing.

Fine talking, Harriet! said Miss Grandison. But let me say, that a witty father is not a desirable character—By the way, ours was as cruel [Shall I say it, Lady L.? You are upon your knees, you know] to two very worthy sisters of his own: one of them ran away from him to a relation in Yorkshire, where she lives still, and as worthy an old maid she is as any in the county: the other died before she could get her fortune paid, or she would have been married to a man she loved, and who loved her: but she left every shilling of her fortune to her maiden sister, and nothing to my father.

It is well my brother is not in hearing, said Lady L. He would not have borne the hundredth part of what we have said. But sufferers will complain. Remember, however, Charlotte, that I am still upon my knees.

See, my Lucy! Rakish men make not either good husbands, or good fathers; not yet good brothers—But, no wonder! The narrow-hearted creatures centre all their delight in themselves—Finely do women choose, who, taken in by their specious airs, vows, protestations! become the abject properties of such wretches! Yet, a reformed rake, they say, makes the best husband—Against general experience this is said—But by whom? By the vulgar and the inconsiderate only, surely!

Miss Grandison proceeded.

Sir Tho. You will never marry any other man living!—And this is declared, in order to convince me that you are not amorous!—Quibbling nonsense! —Had you *not* been amorous, you had not put yourself into a situation, that should give you courage to say this to me. Bold fool! Begone!

She arose.

Yet you shall not go, holding both her hands. And *dare* you thus declare yourself?—What option, I again ask you, is left me?—And yet Lord L. and you, as you pretended just now, were determined only on a *conditional* courtship, as I should, or should not, *approve* of it! Confound your sex! This ever was, and ever will be, the case. The blind god sets you out, where you mean the *best*, on a pacing beast; you amble, prance, parade, till your giddy heads turn round; and then you gallop over hedge and ditch; leap fences; and duty, decency, and discretion, are trodden under-foot!

Poor Miss Caroline! said I, Lucy, to them both—I expected this cruel retort.

I foresaw it, replied Lady L. And this kept me off so long from declaring my preference of Lord L. to all the men in the world; as in justice to his merit, my heart several times bid me do without scruple.

Begone from my presence, said Sir Thomas, proceeded Miss Grandison—Yet he still held her hands—That little witch! I have been watching *her* eyes, and every working muscle of her saucy face [meaning poor me, said Miss Grandison]: she takes part with you in all your distresses—You are sorely distressed, are you not? Am I not a tyrant with you both?—You want to be gone, both of you: then shall I be the subject of your free discourses. All the resentment, that now you endeavour to confine, will then burst out: I shall be intitled to no more of your duty than is consistent with your narrow interest: Lord L. will be consulted in preference to me, and have the whole confidence of my daughters against me. I am now, from this hour, to be looked upon as your enemy, and not your father. But I will renounce you both; and permit your brother, the joy of my life, and the hope of my better days, to come over: and he shall renounce you, as I do, or I will renounce him: and, in that case, I shall be a father without a child; yet three living by the best of women. How would she—

I broke out here, said Miss Grandison, with an emotion that I could not suppress. O my dear mamma! How much do we miss *you*! Were you to have become angel when we were *infants*, should we have missed you as we do *now*?—O my dear mamma! This, this, is the time that girls most want a mother.

I was about to fly for it. I trembled at the sternness of my father's looks, on this apostrophe to my mother. He arose. Caroline, don't stir, said he: I have something more to say to you. Come hither, Charlotte! and held out both his hands—You have burst out at last. I saw your assurance swelling to your throat.—

I threw myself at his feet, and besought him to forgive me!

But taking both my hands in one of his, as I held them up folded—Curse me if I do! said he. I was willing you should be present, in hopes to make you take warning by your sister's folly and inconsistency. Lord L. has been a thief in my house. He has stolen my elder daughter's affections from me: yet has drawn her in, as pretending that he desired not her favour, but as I approved of his addresses. I do *not* approve of them. I hope I may be allowed to be my own judge in this case. She however declares, she will have nobody else. And have I brought up my children till the years that they should be of use and comfort to me; and continued a widower myself for their sakes [so my father was pleased to say, said Miss Grandison]; and all for a man I approve not?—And do you, Charlotte, call your blessed mother from her peaceful tomb, to relieve you and your sister against a tyrant father?—What comfort have I in prospect before me, from such daughters?—But leave me: leave my house. Seek your fortunes where you will. Take your clothes: take all that belongs to you: but nothing that was your mother's. I will give you each a draught on my banker for 500l. When that is gone, according to what I shall hear of your behaviour, you shall, or shall not, have more.

Dear Sir, said Caroline, flinging herself on her knees by me, forgive my sister!—Dear, good Sir! whatever becomes of *me*, forgive your Charlotte.

You are fearless of *your* destiny, Caroline. You will throw yourself into the arms of Lord L. I doubt not—I will send for your brother. But you shall both leave this house. I will shut it up the moment you are gone. It shall never again be opened while I live. When my ashes are mingled with those of your mother, then may you keep open house in it, and trample under-foot the ashes of both.

I sobbed out, Dear Sir, forgive me! I meant not to reflect upon my father, when I wished for my mother. I wished for her for *your* sake, Sir, as well as for *ours*. She would have mediated—She would have softened—

Sir Tho. My hard heart—I know what you mean, Charlotte!

And flung from us a few paces, walking about in wrath, leaving us kneeling at his vacant chair.

He then ringing the bell, the door in his hand, ordered in the housekeeper. She entered. A very good woman she was. She trembled for her kneeling ladies.

Sir Tho. Beckford, do you assist these girls in getting up every-thing that belongs to them. Give me an inventory of what they take. Their father's authority is grievous to them. They want to shake it off. They find themselves women-grown. They want husbands—

Indeed, indeed, Beckford, we don't, said Caroline; interrupted by my father—

Do you give me the lye, bold-face?—

Pray your honour—Good your honour—intreated honest Beckford: never were modester young ladies. They are noted all over the county for their modesty and goodness—

Woman, woman, argue not with me. Modesty never forgets duty. Caroline loves not her father. Lord L. has stolen away her affections from me. Charlotte is of her party: and so are *you*, I find. But take my commands in silence—A week longer they stay not in this house—

Beckford throwing herself on her knees, repeated —Good your honour—

We both arose and threw ourselves at his feet—

Forgive us! I beseech you, forgive us!—For my mamma's sake, forgive us!—said Caroline—

For my mamma's sake, for my brother's sake, dear Sir, forgive you daughters! cried I, in as rueful an accent as Caroline's.

And we each of us took hold of his opened coat, both in tears; and Beckford keeping us company.

Unmoved he went on—I intend you a *pleasure*, girls. I know you want to be freed from my authority. You are women-grown. The man who has daughters knows not discomfort with them, till busy fellows bid them look out of their father's house for that happiness, which they hardly ever find but in it.

We are yours, my papa, said I—We are nobody's else—Do not, do not expose your children to the censures of the world.—Hitherto our reputations are unsullied—

Dear Sir, cried Caroline, throw us not upon the world, the wide world! Dear Sir, continue us in your protection. We want not to be in any other.

You shall try the experiment, girls—I am not *fit* to be your counsellor. Lord L. has distanced me with the one: the other calls upon her departed mother to appear, to shield her from the cruelty of an unnatural father. And Lord L. has the insolence to tell me to my face, that I am too young a father to take upon me the management of women-grown daughters. And so I find it. Blubber not, Beckford; assist your young ladies for their departure. A week is the longest time they have to stay in this house. I want to shut it up: never more to enter its gates.

We continued our pleadings.

O Sir, said Caroline, turn not your children out of doors. We are *daughters*. We never more wanted a father's protection than now.

What have we done, Sir, cried I, to deserve being turned out of your doors?—For every offensive

word we beg your pardon. You shall always have dutiful children of us. Permit me to write to my brother—

So, so! You mend the matter. You want to interest your brother in your favour—You want to appeal to him, do you? and to make a son sit in judgment upon his father!—Prate not, girls! Entreat not!—Get ready to be gone. I will shut up this house—

Wherever *you* are, Sir, entreated I, there let *us* be—Renounce not your children, your penitent children.

He proceeded. I suppose Lord L. will as soon find out your person, Caroline, as he has your inclination; so contrary to my liking. As to you, Charlotte, you may go down to your old aunt *Prue* in Yorkshire [He called their aunt Eleanor so from the word *Prude*] She will be able to instruct you, that patience is a virtue; and that you ought not to be in haste to take a first offer for fear you should not have a second.

Poor sister Caroline! He looked disdainfully at her.

You are my father, Sir, said she. All is welcome from you: but you shall have no cause to reproach me. I will not be in haste. And here on my knees, I promise, that I will never be Lord L.'s, without your consent. I only beg of you, Sir, not to propose to me any other man.

My father partly relented [partly, Harriet]: I take you at your word, girl, said he: and I insist that you shall not correspond with him, nor see him—You answer not to that. But you know my will. And once more, answer or not, I require your obedience. Beckford, you may go. Rise, Caroline.

And am I forgiven, Sir? said I—Dear Sir, forgive your Charlotte—[Yet, Miss Byron, what was my crime?]

Make the best use of the example before you, Charlotte: not to imitate Caroline, in engaging your affections unknown to me.—Remember *that*. She has *her* plagues in giving *me* plague. It is fit she should. Where you cannot in duty follow the example, take the warning.

Beckford was withdrawn. He graciously saluted each girl: and thus triumphantly made them express sorrow for—Do you know for what, Harriet?

I wish, thought I to myself, Lucy, that these boisterous spirits, either fathers or husbands, were not generally most observed.

But was Miss Grandison's spirit so easily subdued? thought I.

You smile, Harriet. What do you smile at?

Will you forgive me, if I tell you?

I don't know.

I depend on your good nature.—I smiled to think, Lady L. how finely Miss Grandison has got up since that time.

Miss Gr. O the sly girl!—Remember you not, that I was *before* your debtor?

A good hit, I protest! said Lady L. Yet Charlotte was always a pert girl out of her father's presence. But I will add a word or two to my sister's narrative.

My father kept us with him till he read Lord L.'s letter, which he opened not till then, and plainly as I saw, to find some new fault with him and me on the occasion: but I came off better than I apprehended I should at the time; for I had not seen it. Here is a copy of it.

Lady L. allowed me, Lucy, to take it up with me, when we parted for the night.

Permit me, Sir, by pen and ink, rather than in person, as I think it will be most acceptable to you,

to thank you, as I most cordially do, for the kind and generous treatment I have received at your hands, during a whole month's residence at Grandison-hall, whither I came with intent to stay but three days.

I am afraid I suffered myself to be surprised into an undue warmth of expression when I last went from your presence. I ask your pardon, if so. You have a right in your own child. God forbid that I should ever attempt to invade it! But what a happy man should I be, if my love for Miss Grandison, and that right, could be made to coincide! I may have appeared to have acted wrong in your apprehension, in applying myself first to Miss Grandison. I beg, Sir, your pardon for that also.

But perhaps I have a still greater fault to atone for. I need not indeed acquaint you with it; but I had rather intitle myself by my ingenuousness to your forgiveness, than wish to conceal any-thing from you in an article of this high importance, whether you grant it me or not. I own then, that when I last departed from your angry presence, I directly went to Miss Grandison, and on my knees implored her hand. I presumed that an alliance with me was not a disgraceful one to her; and assured her, that my estate should work itself clear without any expectation from you; as it will, I hope, in a few years, by good management, to which I was sure she would contribute. But she refused me, and resolved to await the good pleasure of her father; yet condescendingly giving me, I must honestly add, hopes of her favour, could your consent be obtained.

Thus is the important affair circumstanced.

I never will marry any other woman, while there is the least shadow of hope, that she can be mine. The conversation of the best of young men, your son, for two months, in Italy, and one before *that* in

some of the German courts, has made me ambitious of following such an example in every duty of life: and if I might obtain, by your favour, so dear a wife, and so worthy a brother, the happiest man in the world would then be,

Sir,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

L.

Yet my father, said Lady L. called it an artful letter; and observed, that Lord L. was very sure of me, or he had not offered to make a proposal to me, that deserved not to be excused. You were aiming at prudence, girl, in your refusal, I see that, said my father. You had no reason to doubt but Lord L. would hereafter like you the better for declining marriage in that clandestine manner, because the refusal would give him an opportunity to make things more convenient to himself. One half of a woman's virtue is pride, continued he [I hope not truly, said Lady L.]; the other half policy. If they were sure the man would not think the worse of them for it, they would not wait for a second question. Had you had an independent fortune, Caroline, what would you have done?—But go; you are a weak, and yet a cunning girl. Cunning is the wisdom of women. Women's weakness is man's strength. I am sorry that *my* daughters are not compounded of less brittle materials. I wonder that any man who knows the sex, marries.

Thus spoke the *rakish*, the *keeping* father, Lucy, endeavouring to justify his private vices by general reflections on the sex. And thus are wickedness and libertinism called a knowledge of the world, a knowledge of human nature. Swift, for often painting a dunghill, and for his abominable Yahoe story, was complimented with this knowledge: but I hope,

that the character of human nature, the character of creatures made in the image of the Deity, is not to be taken from the overflowings of such dirty imaginations.

What company, my dear, must these men be supposed to have generally kept? How are we authorized to wish (only that good is often produced out of evil, as is instanced in two such daughters, and such a son) that a man of this cast had never had the honour to call a Lady Grandison by his name! And yet Sir Thomas's vices called forth, if they did not establish, her virtue. What shall we say?

> Whatever is, is in its causes just;
> ——But purblind man
> Sees but a part o' th' chain, the nearest link;
> His eyes not carrying to that equal beam,
> That poises all, above. DRYD.

I thought, my Lucy, that the conversation I have attempted to give, would not, though long, appear tedious to you; being upon a *new* subject, the behaviour of a free-liver of a father to his grown-up daughters, when they came to have expectations upon him, which he was not disposed to answer; and the rather as it might serve to strengthen us, who have had in our family none but good men (though we have neighbours of a different character, who have wanted to be acquainted with us) in our resolution to reject the suits of libertine men by a stronger motive even than *for our own sakes:* and I therefore was glad of the opportunity of procuring it for you, and for our Nancy, now her recovered health will allow her to look abroad more than she had of late been used to do. I am sure, my grandmamma, and my aunt Selby, will be pleased with it; because it will be a good supplement to the lessons they have constantly inculcated upon us, against that narrow-

hearted race of men, who live only for the gratification of their own lawless appetites, and consider all the rest of the world as made for themselves, the worst and most noxious reptiles in it.

LETTER XVIII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

THUS far had the ladies proceeded in their interesting story, when the letters of my grandmamma and aunt were brought me from London. By my answer you will see how much I was affected by their contents. The ladies saw my uneasiness, and were curious to know the cause. I told them from whence the letters came, and what the subject was; and that my aunt was to give for me, next Saturday, an answer to Lady D. in person.

I then retired to write. When I had dispatched the messenger, the ladies wished to know the resolution I had come to. I told them I had confirmed my negative.

Miss Grandison, with archness, held up her hands and eyes. I was vexed she did. Then, Charlotte, said I, spitefully, *you* would not have declined accepting this proposal.

She looked earnestly at me, and shook her head. Ah, Harriet, said she, you are an unaccountable girl! You will tell the truth; but not the whole truth.

I blushed as I felt; and believe looked silly.

Ah, Harriet! repeated she; looking as if she would look me through.

Dear Miss Grandison! said I.

There is some Northamptonshire gentleman, of whom we have not yet heard.

I was a little easier then. But *can* this lady mean any-thing particular? She cannot be so ungenerous, surely, as to play upon a poor girl, if she thought her *entangled*. All I am afraid of, is, that my temper will be utterly ruined. I am not so happy in myself, as I used to be. Don't you think, Lucy, that, taking one thing with another, I am in a situation that is very teazing?—But let me find a better subject.

* * * *

The ladies, at my request, pursued their FAMILY-HISTORY.

Lord L. and Miss Caroline went on, hoping for a change in Sir Thomas's mind. He would, no doubt, they said, have been overcome by the young lady's duty, and my Lord L.'s generosity, had he not made it inconvenient to himself, to part with money.

He went to town, and carried his daughters with him; and, it is thought, would not have been sorry, had the lovers married without his consent; for, he prohibited anew, on their coming to town, my lord's visits; so that they were obliged to their sister, as she pleasantly had told Lady L. for contriving to forward their interviews.

Mean time, my lord's affairs growing urgent, by reason of his two sisters marrying, he gave way to the offers of a common friend of his and Lord W.'s, to engage that nobleman, who approved of the match, to talk to Sir Thomas on the subject.

Lord W. and the baronet met. My lord was earnest in the cause of the lovers. Sir Thomas was not pleased with his interfering in his family affairs. And indeed a more improper man could hardly have been applied to on the occasion: for Lord W. who is immensely rich, was always despised by Sir Thomas for his avarice; and he as much disliked Sir Thomas for what he called his profusion.

High words passed between them. They parted in passion; and Sir Thomas resenting Lord L.'s appeal to Lord W. the sisters were in a worse situation than before; for now, besides having incurred the indignation of their father, their uncle, who was always afraid that Sir Thomas's extravagance would reduce the children to the necessity of hoping for his assistance, made a pretence of their father's ill treatment to disclaim all acts of kindness and relation to them.

What concerned the sisters still more, was, my lord's declared antipathy to their brother; and that for no other reason, but because his father (who, he was sure, he said, could neither love nor hate in a right place) doted on him.

In this sad situation were these lovers, when overtures were made to Sir Thomas for his younger daughter: but though Miss Charlotte gave him no pretence to accuse *her* of beginning a love-affair unknown to him; yet those overtures never came to her knowledge from him, though they did from others: and would you have wondered, Harriet, said she, with such treatment before my eyes as Caroline met with, if I had been provoked to take some rash step?

No provocation, replied I, from a father, can justify a rash step in a child. I am glad, and so, I dare say, are you, that your prudence was your safeguard, when you were deprived of that which so good a child might have expected from a father's indulgence, especially when a mother was not in being.

Miss Grandison coloured, and bit her lip. Why did she colour?

At last Sir Thomas took a resolution to look into and regulate his affairs, preparative to the leave he intended to give to his beloved son to come over.

From *his* duty, discretion, and good management, he was sure, he said, he should be the happiest of men. But he was at a loss what to do with Mrs. Oldham and her two children. He doubted not but his son had heard of his guilty commerce with her: yet he cared not, that the young gentleman should find her living in a kind of wife-like state in one of the family-seats: and yet she had made too great a sacrifice to him, to be unhandsomely used; and he thought he ought to provide for his children by her.

While he was meditating this change of measures, that he might stand well with a son, whose character for virtue and prudence made his father half afraid of him, a proposal of marriage was made to him for his son by one of the first men in the kingdom, whose daughter, accompanying her brother and his wife, in a tour to France and Italy, saw and fell in love with the young gentleman at Florence: and her brother gave way to his sister's regard for him, for the sake of the character he bore among the people of prime consideration in Italy.

Sir Thomas had several meetings on this subject, both with the brother and the earl his father; and was so fond of bringing it to bear, that he had thoughts of reserving to himself an annuity, and making over the whole of his estate to his son, in favour of this match: and once he said, He should by this means do as Victor Amadeus of Savoy did, rid himself of many incumbrances; and, being not a *king*, was sure of his son's duty to him.

The ladies found a letter of their brother's among Sir Thomas's loose papers, which shewed that this offer had been actually made to him. This is a copy of it:

DEAR AND EVER-HONOURED SIR,

I am astonished at the contents of your last favour. If the proposal made in it arose from the natural greatness of your mind, and an indulgence which I have so often experienced, what shall I say to it?—I cannot bear it. If it proceed from proposals made to you, God forbid that I should give your name to a woman, how illustrious soever in her descent, and how high soever the circumstances of her family, whose friends could propose such conditions to my father.

I receive with inexpressible joy so near a hope of the long-wished-for leave to throw myself at your feet in my native country. When I have this happiness granted me, I will unbosom my whole heart to my father. The credit of your name, and the knowledge every one has of your goodness to me, will be my recommendation whenever you shall wish me to enlarge the family-connexions.

Till I have this honour, I beseech you, Sir, to discontinue the treaty already begun.

You are pleased to ask my opinion of the lady, and whether I have any objection to her person. I remember, I thought her a very agreeable woman.

You mention, Sir, the high sense the lady, as well as Lord and Lady N. have of the civilities they received from me. My long residence abroad gives me the power of doing little offices for those of my country, who visit France and Italy. The little services I did to my lord, and the ladies with him, are too gratefully remembered by them.

I am extremely concerned that you have reason to be displeased with any part of the conduct of my sisters. Can the daughters of such a mother as you had the happiness to give them, forget themselves? Their want of consideration shall receive no coun-

tenance from me. I shall let them know, that my love, my esteem, if it be of consequence with them, is not founded on relation, but merit: and that, where duty to a parent is wanting, all other good qualities are to be suspected.

You ask my opinion of Lord L. and whether he has sought to engage me to favour his address to your Caroline. He wrote to me on that subject. I inclose his letter, and a copy of my answer. As to my opinion of him, I must say, that I have not met with any British man abroad, of whose discretion, sobriety, and good-nature, I think more highly than I do of Lord L.'s. Justice requires of me this testimony. But as to the affair between him and my sister, I shall be extremely sorry, if Lord L.'s *first* impropriety of behaviour were to you; and if my sister has suffered her heart to be engaged against her duty.

You have the goodness to say, that my return will be a strengthening of your hands: May my own be weakened; may I ever want the power to do good to myself, or to those I love; when I forget, or depart from, the duty owing to the most indulgent of fathers, by his

CHARLES GRANDISON!

What an excellent young man is this!—But observe, Lucy; he says he will on his return to England unbosom his whole heart to his father; and till then, he desires him to discontinue the begun treaty with Lord N.—Ah, my dear!—What has any *new* acquaintance to expect, were she to be entangled in a *hopeless passion?* But let us consider—Had Sir Charles been actually married, would his being so, have enabled a woman's *reason* to triumph over her passion?—If so, passion is surely conquerable: and did I know any-body that would allow it to be so in

the *one* case, and not in the *other*, I would bid her take shame to herself, and, with deep humiliation, mourn her ungovernable folly.

The above letter came not to the hands of the young ladies till after their father's death, which happened within a month of his receiving it, and before he had actually given permission for the young gentleman's return. You may suppose they were excessively affected with the bad impressions their father had sought to make in their brother's heart, of their conduct; and, when he died, were the more apprehensive of their force.

He had suspended the treaty of marriage for his son till the young gentleman should arrive. He had perplexed himself about his private affairs, which, by long neglect, became very intricate, and of consequence must be very irksome for such a man to look into. He was resolved therefore to leave it to each steward (having persuaded himself, against appearances, to have a good opinion of both) to examine the accounts of the other: not only as this would give the least trouble to himself, but as they had several items to charge, which he had no mind should be explained to his son. Nor were those gentlemen less solicitous to obtain discharges from him; for, being apprised of his reason for looking into his affairs, they were afraid of the inspection of so good a manager as their young master was known to be.

Mr. Filmer, the steward for the Irish estate, came over, on this occasion, with his accounts: the two stewards acted in concert; and, on the report of each, Sir Thomas examined totals only, and ordered releases to be drawn for his signing.

What a degrader even of *high* spirits, is vice! What meanness was there in Sir Thomas's pride!

To be afraid of the eye of a son, of whose duty he was always boasting!

But who shall answer for the reformation of an habitual libertine, when a temptation offers? Observe what followed:

Mr. Filmer, knowing Sir Thomas's frailty, had brought over with him, and with a view to ensnare the unhappy man, a fine young creature, not more than sixteen, on pretence of visiting her aunt who lived in Pallmall, and who was a relation of his wife. [illegible] innocent of actual crime: but her parents [illegible] no virtue, and had not made it a part of the young woman's education; but, on the contrary, had brought her up with a notion that her beauty would make her fortune; and she knew it was all the fortune they had to give her.

Mr. Filmer, in his attendances on Sir Thomas, was always praising the beauty of Miss Obrien; her genteel descent, as well as figure; her innocence [Innocence! the attractive equally to the attempts of rakes and devils!]: but the baronet, intent upon pursuing his better schemes, for some time, only gave the artful man the hearing. At last, however (for curiosity-sake), he was prevailed upon to make the aunt a visit. The niece was not absent. She more than answered all that Filmer had said in her praise, as to the beauty of her person. Sir Thomas repeated his visits. The girl was well tutored; behaved with prudence, with *reserve* rather; and, in short, made such an impression on his heart, that he declared to Filmer that he could not live without her.

Advantage was endeavoured to be taken of his infatuation. He offered high terms: but for some time the aunt insisted upon his marrying her niece.

Sir Thomas had been too long a *leader* in the

free world, to be so *taken-in*, as it is called. But at last, a proposal was made him, from no part of which the aunt declared she would recede, though the poor girl (who, it was pretended, loved him above all the men she had ever seen) were to break her heart for him. A fine piece of flattery, Lucy, to a man who numbered near three times her years; and who was still fond of making conquests!

The terms were: That he should settle upon the young woman 500l. a-year for her life; and on her father and mother, if they could be brought to consent to the (infamous) bargain, 200l. a-year for their joint and separate lives: that Miss Obrien should live at one of Sir Thomas's seats in England; be allowed genteel equipages, his livery, and even (for her credit-sake, in the eye of her own relations, who were of figure) to be connived at in taking his name. The aunt left it to his generosity to reward *her* for the part she had taken, and was to take, to bring all this about with the parents and girl.

Sir Thomas thought these demands much too high: he stood out for some time; but artifice being used on all sides to draw him on, *love*, as it is called (prostituted word!) obliged him to comply.

His whole concern was now, how to provide for this new expence, without *robbing*, as he called it, his son [daughters were but daughters, and no part of the question with him]; and to find excuses for continuing the young gentleman abroad.

Mrs. Oldham had for some time been uneasy herself, and made him so, by her compunction on their guilty commerce; and, on Sir Thomas's communicating his intention to recal his son, hinted her wishes to be allowed to quit the house in Essex, and to retire both from that and him; for fear of making

the young gentleman as much her enemy, as the two sisters avowedly were.

Sir Thomas, now that he was acquainted with Miss Obrien, better relished Mrs. Oldham's proposal than otherwise he would have done: and before he actually signed and sealed with Miss Obrien's aunt, for her niece, he thought it best to sound that unhappy woman, whether she in earnest desired to retire; and if so, what were her expectations from him: resolving, in order to provide for both expences, to cut down timber, that, he said, groaned for the ax; but which hitherto he had let stand as a resource for his son, and to enable him to clear incumbrances that he had laid upon a part of his estate.

Accordingly he set out for his seat in Essex.

There, while he was planning future schemes of living, and reckoning upon his savings in several articles, in order the better to support an expence so guiltily to be incurred; and had actually begun to treat with Mrs. Oldham: who agreed, at the first word, to retire; not knowing but his motive (poor man!) as well as hers, was reformation:— There was he attacked by a violent fever; which in three days deprived him of the use of the reason he had so much abused.

Mr. Bever, his English steward, posted down, on the first news he had of his being taken ill, hoping to get him to sign the ready-drawn up releases. But the eagerness he shewed to have this done, giving cause of suspicion to Mrs. Oldham, she would not let him see his master, though he arrived on the second day of Sir Thomas's illness, which was before the fever had seized his brain.

Mr. Filmer had been to meet, and conduct to London, Mrs. Obrien, the mother of the girl, who came

over to see the sale of the poor victim's honour completed [Could you have thought, Lucy, there was such a mother in the world?]; and it was not till the fifth day of the unhappy man's illness that he got to him, with his releases also ready drawn up, as well as the articles between him and the Obriens, in hopes to find him well enough to sign both. He was in a visible consternation when he found his master so ill. He would have staid in the house to watch the event; but Mrs. Oldham not permitting him to do so, he put up at the next village, in hopes of a favourable turn of the distemper.

On the sixth day, the physicians giving no hopes of Sir Thomas's recovery, Mrs. Oldham sent to acquaint the two young ladies with his danger; and they instantly set out to attend their father.

They could not be supposed to love Mrs. Oldham; and, taking Mr. Grandison's advice, who accompanied them, they let the unhappy woman know, that there was no farther occasion for her attendance on their father. She had prudently, before, that she might give the less offence to the two ladies, removed her son by her former husband, and her two children by Sir Thomas; but insisted on continuing about him, and in the house, as well from motives of tenderness, as for her own security, lest she should be charged with embezzlements; for she expected not mercy from the family, if Sir Thomas died.

Poor woman! what a tenure was that by which she held!

Miss Caroline consented, and brought her sister to consent, that she should stay; absolutely against Mr. Grandison's advice; who, libertine as he was himself, was very zealous to punish a poor Magdalen, who, though faulty, was not so faulty as him-

self. Wicked people, I believe, my dear, are the severest punishers of those wicked people, who administer not to their own particular gratifications. Can mercy be expected from such? Mercy is a *virtue.*

It was shocking to the last degree to the worthy daughters to hear their raving father call upon nobody so often, as upon Miss Obrien; though they then knew nothing of the girl, nor of the treaty on foot for her; nor could Mrs. Oldham inform them, who or what she was. Sometimes, when the unhappy man was quietest, he would call upon his son, in words generally of kindness and love; once in particular, crying out—O save me! save me! my Grandison, by thy presence!—I shall be consumed by the fire that is already lighted up in my boiling blood.

On the ninth day, no hope being left, and the physicians declaring him to be a dying man, they dispatched a letter by a messenger to hasten over their brother, who (having left his ward, Miss Emily Jervois, at Florence, in the protection of the worthy Dr. Bartlett) was come to Paris, as he had written, in expectation of receiving there his father's permission to return to England.

On the eleventh day of his illness, Sir Thomas came a little to himself. He knew his daughters. He wept over them. He wished he had been kinder to them. He was sensible of his danger. Several times he lifted up his feeble hands, and dying eyes, repeating, God is just. I am, I have been, very wicked! Repentance! Repentance! how hard a task! said he once to the minister who attended him, and whose prayers he desired. And Mrs. Oldham once coming in his sight—O Mrs. Oldham! said he, what is this world now? What would I give—But repent, repent—Put your good resolutions in

practice, lest I have more souls than my own to answer for.

Soon after this his delirium returned; and he expired about eleven at night, in dreadful agonies. Unhappy man!—Join a tear with mine, my Lucy, on the awful exit of Sir Thomas Grandison, though we knew him not.

Poor man! in the pursuit—Poor man!—He lived not to see his beloved son!—

The two daughters, and Mr. Grandison, and Mrs. Oldham (for her own security) put their respective seals on every place, at that house, where papers, or any-thing of value, were supposed to be deposited: and Mr. Grandison, assuming that part of the management, dismissed Mrs. Oldham from the house; and would not permit her to take with her more than one suit of clothes, besides those she had on. She wept bitterly, and complained of harsh treatment: but was not pitied; and was referred by Mr. Grandison to his absent cousin for still more rigorous justice.

She appealed to the ladies; but they reproached her with having lived a life of shame, against better knowledge; and said, That now she must take the consequence. Her punishment was but beginning. Their brother would do her strict justice, they doubted not: but a man of his virtue, they were sure, would abhor her. She had misled their father, they said. It was not in *his* temper to be cruel to his children. She had lived upon their fortunes: and now they had nothing but their brother's favour to depend upon.

Daughters so dutiful, my Lucy, did right to excuse their father all they could: but Mrs. Oldham suffered for all.

I am so much interested in this important history,

that I have not the heart to break into it, to tell you how very agreeably I pass my time with these ladies, and Lord L. in those parts of the day, when we are all assembled. Miss Emily has a fine mind; gentle, delicate, innocently childish beyond her stature and womanly appearance; but not her years. The two ladies are very good to her. Lord L. is an excellent man.

This is Friday morning: and no Sir Charles! *Canterbury* is surely a charming place. Was you ever at *Canterbury*, Lucy?

To-morrow, Lady D. is to visit my aunt. My letter to my aunt will be in time, I hope. I long to know—Yet why should I?—But Lady D. is so *good* a woman! I hope she will take kindly my denial; and look upon it as an absolute one.

I have a great deal more of the family-history to give you: I wish I could write as fast as we can talk. But, Lucy, concerning the lady, with whose father Sir Thomas was in treaty for his son? Don't you want to know something more about her?—But, ah. my dear, be this as it may, there is a lady, in whose favour both sisters interest themselves. I have found that out. Nor will it be long, I suppose, before I shall be informed who she is; and whether or not Sir Charles encourages the proposal.

Adieu, my Lucy! You will soon have another letter from your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XIX.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

You see, my dear, how many important matters depended on the conduct and determination of the young baronet.

Lord L. was at this time in Scotland, where he had seen married two of his three sisters; and was busying himself in putting his affairs in such a way, as should enable him to depend the less either on the justice or generosity of Sir Thomas Grandison, whose beloved daughter he was impatient to call his wife.

Miss Charlotte was absolutely dependent upon her brother's generosity; and both sisters had reason to be the more uneasy, as it was now, in the worldly-wise way of thinking, become his *interest* to keep up the distance which their unhappy father had been solicitous to create between them, from a policy low, and entirely unworthy of him.

The unhappy Mrs. Oldham had already received a severe instance of the change of her fortune; and had no reason to doubt, but that the sisters, who had always, from the time she was set over them as their governess, looked upon her with an evil eye; and afterwards had but too just a pretence for their aversion; would incense against her a brother, whose fortune had been lessened by his father's profusion. The few relations she had living, were people of honour, who renounced all correspondence with her, from the time she had thrown herself so absolutely into the power of Sir Thomas Grandison: and she had three sons to take care of.

Bever and Filmer, the English and Irish stewards, were attending Sir Charles's arrival with great im-

patience, in hopes he would sign those accounts of theirs, to which they had no reason to question but his father would have set his hand, had he not been taken so suddenly ill, and remained delirious almost to the end of his life.

Miss Obrien, her mother, and aunt, I shall mention in another place.

Lord W. had a great dislike to his nephew, for no other reason, as I have said, than because he was his father's favourite. Yet were not his nieces likely to find their uncle more their friend for that. He was indeed almost entirely under the management of a woman, who had not either the birth, the education, the sense, or moderation, of Mrs. Oldham, to put in the contrary scale against her lost virtue; but abounded, it seems, in a low selfish cunning, by which she never failed to carry every point she set her heart upon: for, as is usual, they say, with these keeping men, Lord W. would yield up, to avoid her teazing, what he would not have done to a wife of fortune and family, who might have been a credit to his own: but the *real slave* imagined himself master of his *liberty;* and sat down satisfied with the sound of the word.

The suspended treaty of marriage with Lord N.'s sister was also to be taken into consideration, either to be proceeded with, or broken off, as should be concluded by both parties.

This was the situation of affairs in the family, when Sir Charles arrived.

He returned not an answer to his sister's notification of his father's danger; but immediately set out for Calais, embarked, and the same day arrived at the house of his late father in St. James's Square. His sisters concluded, that he would be in town nearly as soon as a letter could come; they therefore every hour, for two days together, expected him.

Judge, my dear, from the foregoing circumstances (sisterly love out of the question, which yet it could not be) how awful must be to them, after eight or nine years' absence, the first appearance of a brother, on whom the whole of their fortunes depended; and to whom they had been accused by a father, now so lately departed, of want of duty; their brother's duty unquestionable!

In the *same* moment he alighted from his post-chaise, the door was opened; he entered; and his two sisters met him, in the hall.

The graceful youth of seventeen, with fine curling auburn locks waving upon his shoulders; delicate in complexion; intelligence sparkling in his fine free eyes; and good humour sweetening his lively features; they remembered: and, forgetting the womanly beauties into which their own features were ripened in the same space of time, they seemed not to expect that manly stature and air, and that equal vivacity and intrepidity, which every one who sees this brother, admires in his noble aspect: an aspect then appearing more solemn than usual; an unburied and beloved father in his thoughts.

O my brother! said Caroline, with open arms: but, shrinking from his embrace; *May* I say, my brother?—and was just fainting. He clasped her in his arms, to support her—

Charlotte, surprised at her sister's emotion, and affected with his presence, ran back into the room they had both quitted, and threw herself upon a settee.

Her brother followed her into the room, his arm round Miss Caroline's waist, soothing her; and, with eyes of expectation, My Charlotte! said he, his inviting hand held out, and hastening towards the settee. She then found her feet: and throwing her arms about his neck, he folded both sisters to his

bosom: Receive, my dearest sisters, receive your brother, your friend; assure yourselves of my unabated love.

That assurance, they said, was balm to their hearts; and when each was seated, he, sitting over-against them, looked first on one, then on the other; and, taking each by the hand, Charming women! said he: how I admire my sisters! You *must* have minds answerable to your persons. What pleasure, what pride, shall I take in my sisters!

My dear Charlotte! said Miss Caroline, taking her sister's other hand, has not our brother, now we see him near, all the brother in his aspect? His goodness only looks stronger, and more perfect: What was I afraid of?

My heart also sunk, said Charlotte; I know not why. But we feared—Indeed, Sir, we both feared —O my brother!—Tears trickling down the cheeks of each—We meant not to be *undutiful*—

Love your brother, my sisters, as he will endeavour to deserve your love. My mother's daughters could not be undutiful! Mistake only!—Unhappy misapprehension!—We have all something—Shades as well as lights there must be!—A kind, a dutiful veil—

He pressed the hand of each with his lips, arose, went to the window, and drew out his handkerchief.

What must he have had in his thoughts? No doubt, but his father's unhappy turn, and recent departure! No wonder, that such a son could not, without pious emotion, bear the reflections that must crowd into his mind at that instant!

Then, turning towards them, Permit me, my dear sisters, said he, to retire for a few moments. He turned his face from them. My father, said he, demands this tribute.—I will not ask *your* excuse, my sisters.

They joined in the payment of it; and waited on him to his apartment, with silent respect. No ceremony, I hope, my Caroline, my Charlotte. We were true sisters and brother a few years ago. See your Charles as you saw him then. Let not absence, which has increased my love, lessen yours.

Each sister took a hand, and would have kissed it. He clasped his arms about them both, and saluted them.

He cast his eye on his father's and mother's pictures with some emotion; then on them; and again saluted each.

They withdrew. He waited on them to the stairs head. Sweet obligingness! Amiable sisters! In a quarter of an hour I seek your presence.

Tears of joy trickled down their cheeks. In half an hour he joined them in another dress, and resaluted his sisters with an air of tenderness, that banished fear, and left room for nothing but sisterly love.

Mr. Grandison came in soon after. That gentleman, who (as I believe I once before mentioned) had affected, in support of his own free way of life, to talk how he would laugh at his cousin Charles, when he came to England, on his *pious* turn, as he called it; and even to boast, that he would enter him into the town-diversions, and make a *man* of him; was struck with the dignity of his person, and yet charmed with the freedom of his behaviour. Good God! said he to the ladies afterwards, what a fine young man is your brother!—What a self-denier was your father!—

The ladies retiring, Mr. Grandison entered upon the circumstances of Sir Thomas's illness and death; which, he told the sisters, he touched *tenderly*: as tenderly, I suppose, as a man of his unfeeling heart *could* touch such a subject. He inveighed against

Mrs. Oldham; and with some exultation over her, told his cousin what they had done as to her; and exclaimed against her for the state she had lived in; and the difficulty she made to resign Sir Thomas to his daughters' care in his illness; and particularly for presuming to insist upon putting her seal with theirs to the cabinets and closets, where they supposed were any valuables.

Sir Charles heard all this without saying one word, either of approbation or otherwise.

Are you not pleased with what we have done, as to this vile woman, Sir Charles?

I have no doubt, cousin, replied Sir Charles, that every-thing was designed for the best.

And then Mr. Grandison, as he told the sisters, ridiculed the unhappy woman on her grief, and mortified behaviour, when she was obliged to quit the house, where, he said, she had reigned so long lady paramount.

Sir Charles asked, If they had searched for or found a will?

Mr. Grandison said, They had looked in every probable place; but found none.

What I think to do, cousin, said Sir Charles, is to inter the venerable remains (I must always speak in this dialect, Sir) with those of my mother. This, I know, was his desire. I will have an elegant, but not sumptuous monument erected to the memory of both, with a modest inscription, that shall rather be matter of instruction to the living, than a panegyric on the departed. The funeral shall be decent, but not ostentatious. The difference in the expence shall be privately applied to relieve or assist distressed housekeepers, or some of my father's poor tenants, who have large families, and have not been wanting in their honest endeavours to maintain them. My sisters, I hope, will not think themselves neg-

lected, if I spare them the pain of conferring with them on a subject that must afflict them.

These sentiments were new to Mr. Grandison. He told the sisters what Sir Charles had said. I did not contradict him, said he: but as Sir Thomas had so magnificent a mind, and always lived up to it, I should have thought he ought to have been honoured with a magnificent funeral. But I cannot but own, however, that what your brother said had something great and noble in it.

The two ladies, on their brother's hinting his intentions to them, acquiesced with all he proposed; and all was performed according to directions which he himself wrote down. He allowed of his sisters compliance with the fashion: but he in person saw performed, with equal piety and decorum, the last offices.

Sir Charles is noted for his great dexterity in business. Were I to express myself in the language of Miss Grandison, I should say, that a sun-beam is not more penetrating. He goes to the bottom of an affair at once, and wants but to hear both sides of a question to determine; and when he determines, his execution can only be staid by perverse accidents, that lie out of the reach of human foresight: and when he finds *that* to be the case, yet the thing right to be done, he changes his methods of proceeding: as a man would do, who finding himself unable to pursue his journey by one road, because of a sudden inundation, takes another, which, though a little about, carries him home in safety.

As soon as the solemnity was over, Sir Charles, leaving every-thing at Grandison-hall as he found it, and the seals unbroken, came to town, and, in the presence of his sisters, broke the seals that had been affixed to the cabinets and escritoires in the house there.

The ladies told him, that their bills were ready for his inspection; and that they had a balance in their hands. His answer was, I hope, my sisters, we shall have but one interest. It is for you to make demands upon me, and for me to answer them as I shall be able.

He made memorandums of the contents of many papers, with surprising expedition; and then locked them up. He found a bank-note of 350l. in the private drawer of one of the bureaus in the apartment that was his father's. Be pleased, my sisters, said he, presenting it to Miss Caroline, to add that to the money in your hands, to answer family calls.

He then went with his sisters to the house in Essex. When there, he told them, it was necessary for Mrs. Oldham (who had lodgings at a neighbouring farm-house) to be present at the breaking of the seals, as she had hers affixed; and accordingly sent for her.

They desired to be excused seeing her.

It will be a concern to me, said he, to see her: but what *ought* to be done, *must* be done.

The poor woman came with fear and trembling.

You will not, Lucy, be displeased with an account of what passed on the occasion. I was very attentive to it, as given by Miss Grandison, whose memory was aided by the recollection of her sister. And, as I am used to aim at giving affecting scenes in the very words of the persons, as near as I can, to make them appear lively and natural, you will expect that I should attempt to do it in this case.

Sir Charles, not expecting Mrs. Oldham would be there so soon, was in his stud with his groom and coachman, looking upon his horses: for there were most of the hunters and racers, some of the finest beasts in the kingdom.

By the mistake of Miss Caroline's maid, the poor

woman was shewn into the room where the two ladies were. She was in great confusion; courtesied; wept; and stood, as well as she could stand; but leaned against the tapestry-hung wall.

How came this? said Miss Caroline to her maid. *She* was not to be shewn in to us.

I beg pardon; courtesying, and was for withdrawing; but stopt on Charlotte's speech to her—My *brother* sent for you, madam—Not *we*, I assure you. —He says it is necessary, as you thought fit to put your seal with ours to the locked-up places, that you should be present at the breaking them. Yet he will see you with as much pain as you give us. Prepare yourself to see him. You seem mighty unfit—No wonder!

You have heard, Lucy, that Charlotte attributes a great deal of alteration for the better in her temper, and even in her heart, to the example of her brother.

Indeed, I *am* unfit, *very* unfit, said the poor woman. Let me, ladies, bespeak your generosity: a little of your pity: a little of your countenance. I am, indeed, an unhappy woman!

And so you deserve to be.

I am sure *we* are the sufferers, said Caroline.

Lord L. as she owned, was then in her head, as well as heart.

If I may withdraw, without seeing Sir Charles, I should take it for a favour: I find I cannot bear to see him. I insist not upon being present at the breaking the seals. I throw myself upon your mercy, ladies, and upon his.

Cruel girls! shall I call them, Lucy? I think I will—*Cruel* girls! They asked her not to sit down, though they saw the terror she was in: and that she had the modesty to forbear sitting in their presence.

What an humbling thing is the consciousness of having lived faultily, when calamity seizes upon the heart!—But shall not virtue be appeased, when the hand of God is acknowledged in the words, countenance, and behaviour of the offender! Yet, perhaps, it is hard for sufferers—Let me consider—Have I, from my heart, forgiven Sir Hargrave Pollexfen?—I will examine into that another time.

And so you have put yourself into mourning, madam?

Shall I say, that Caroline said this, and what follows? Yet I am glad it was not Charlotte, methinks; for Caroline thought herself a sufferer by her, in an especial manner—However, I am sorry it was either.

Pretty *deep* too! Your weeds, I suppose, are at your lodgings—

You have been told, Lucy, that Mrs. Oldham by many was called Lady Grandison; and that her birth, her education, good sense, though all was not sufficient to support her virtue against necessity and temptation (poor woman!) might have given her a claim to the title.

Indeed, ladies, I am a *real* mourner: but I never myself assumed a character, to which it was never in my thought to solicit a right.

Then, *madam*, the world does you injustice, *madam*, said Charlotte.

Here, ladies, are the keys of the stores; of the confectionary; of the wine-vaults: you demanded them not, when you dismissed me from this house. I thought to send them: but by the time I could provide myself with a lodging, you were gone; and left only two common servants, besides the groom and helpers: and I thought it was best to keep the keys, till I could deliver them to your order, or Sir Charles's. I have not been a bad manager, ladies,

considered as a housekeeper. All I have in the world is under the seals. I am at yours and your brother's mercy.

The sisters ordered their woman to take the keys, and bring them to the foot of their thrones. Dear ladies, forgive me, if you should, by surprise, see this. I know that you think and act in a different manner now.

Here comes my brother! said Caroline.

You'll soon know, madam, what you have to trust to from *him*, said Charlotte.

The poor woman trembled, and turned pale. O how her heart must throb!

LETTER XX.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Sir Charles entered. She was near the door. His sisters were at the other end of the room.

He bowed to her—Mrs. Oldham, I presume, said he—Pray, madam, be seated. I sent to you, that you might see the seals—Pray, madam, sit down.

He took her hand, and led her to a chair not far distant from them; and sat down in one between them and her.

His sisters owned, they were startled at his complaisance to her. Dear ladies! they forgot, at that moment, that *mercy* and *justice* are sister-graces, and cannot be separated in a virtuous bosom.

Pray, madam, compose yourself; looking upon her with eyes of anguish and pity mingled, as the ladies said, they afterwards recollected with more approbation than at the time. What, my Lucy,

must be the reflections of this humane man, respecting his father, and her, at that moment!

He turned to his sisters, as if to give Mrs. Oldham time to recover herself. A flood of tears relieved her. She tried to suppress her audible sobs, and, most considerately, he would not hear them. Her emotions attracting the eyes of the ladies, he took them off, by asking them something about a picture that hung on the other side of the room.

He then drew his chair nearer to her; I am not a stranger to your melancholy story, Mrs. Oldham—Be not discomposed—

He stopt to give her a few moments' time to recover herself—Resuming; See in me a friend, ready to thank you for all your past good offices, and to forget all mistaken ones.

She could not bear this. She threw herself at his feet. He raised her to her chair.

Poor Mr. Oldham, said he, was unhappily careless! Yet I have been told he loved you, and that you merited his love—Your misfortunes threw you into the knowledge of our family. You have been a faithful manager of the affairs of this house—By written evidences I can justify you; evidences that no one here will, I am sure, dispute.

It was plain, that his father had written in her praise, as an œconomist; the only light in which this pious son was then willing to consider her.

Indeed, I have—And would still have been—

No more of that, madam. Mr. Grandison, who is a good-natured man, but a little hasty, has told me that he treated you with unkindness. He owns you were patient under it. Patience never yet was a solitary virtue. He thought you wrong for insisting to put your seal: but he was mistaken: you did right, as to the thing; and I dare say you did not wrong in the manner. No one can judge properly

of another, that cannot be that very other in imagination, when he takes the judgment-seat.

O my brother! O my brother—said both ladies, at one time—half in admiration, though half-concerned at a goodness so eclipsing.

Bear with me, my sisters. We have *all* something to be forgiven for.

They knew not how far they were concerned, in his opinion, in the admonition, from what their father had written of *them*. They owned, that they were mortified: yet knew not how to be angry with a brother, who though more than an equal sufferer with them, could preserve *his* charity.

He then made a motion, dinner-time, as he said, not being near, for chocolate; and referred to Mrs. Oldham to direct it, as knowing best where every-thing was. She referred to the delivered-up keys. Caroline called in her servant, and gave them to her. Sir Charles desired Mrs. Oldham to be so good as to direct the maid.

The ladies easily saw, that he intended by this, to relieve the poor woman by some little employment; and to take the opportunity of her absence, to endeavour to reconcile them to his intentions, as well as manner of behaving to her.

The moment she was gone out of the room, he thus addressed himself to the ladies.

My dear sisters, let me beg of you to think favourably of me on this occasion. I would not disoblige you for the world. I consider not the case of this poor woman, on the foot of her own merits, with regard to us. Our father's memory is concerned. Was *he* accountable to us, was *she*, for what each did?—Neither of them was. She is intitled to justice, for its own sake: to generosity, for ours: to kindness, for my father's. Mr. Grandison accused her of living in too much state as he called

it. Can that be said to be *her* fault? With regard to *us*, was it *any-body's?* My father's magnificent spirit was well known. He was often at this house. Wherever he was, he lived in the same taste. He praises to me Mrs. Oldham's œconomy in several of his letters. He had a right to do what he would with his own fortune. It was not *ours* till now. Whatever he *has* left us, he might have still lessened it. That œconomy is all that concerns us in interest; and that is in her favour. If any act of kindness to my sisters was wanting from the parent, they will rejoice, that they *deserved* what they hoped to meet with from him: and where the parent had an option, they will be glad, that they acquiesced under it. He could have given Mrs. Oldham a title to a name that would have commanded our respect, if not our reverence. My sisters have enlarged minds: they are daughters of the most charitable, the most forgiving, of women. Mr. Grandison (it could not be *you*) has carried too severe a hand towards her. Yet he meant service to us all. I was willing, before I commended this poor woman to your *mercy* (since it was necessary to see her) to judge of her behaviour. Is she not humbled enough? From my soul I pity her. She loved my father; and I have no doubt but mourns for him in secret; yet dares not own, dares not plead, her love. I am willing to consider her only as one who has executed a principal office in this house: it becomes us so to behave to her, as that the world should think we consider her in that light only. As to the *living proofs* (unhappy innocents!) I am concerned, that what are the delight of other parents, are the disgrace of this. But let *us* not, by resentment, publish faults that could not be *hers only*.—Need I say more?—It would pain me to be obliged to it. With pain have I said thus much—The circumstances

of the case are such, that I cannot give it its full force. I ask it of you as a favour, not as a right (I should hate myself, were I capable of exerting to the utmost any power that may be devolved upon me) that you will be so good as to leave the conduct of this affair to me. You will greatly oblige me, if you can give me your cheerful acquiescence.

They answered by tears. They could not speak.

By this time Mrs. Oldham returned; and, in an humble manner, offered chocolate to each young lady. They bent their necks, not their bodies, with cold civility, as they owned; each extending her stately hand, as if she knew not whether she should put it out or not.

Methinks I see them. How could such gracious girls be so ungracious, after what Sir Charles had said?

Their brother, they saw, seemed displeased. He took the salver from Mrs. Oldham. Pray, madam, sit down, said he, offering her a dish, which she declined; and held the toasted bread to his sisters; who then were ready enough to take each some— And when they had drank their chocolate; Now, Mrs. Oldham, said he, I will attend you—Sisters, you will give me your company.

They arose to follow him. The poor woman courtesied, I warrant, and stood by while they passed: and methinks I see the dear girls bridle, and walk as stately, and as upright, as duchesses may be supposed to do in a coronation-procession.

Miss Grandison acknowledged, that she grudged her brother's extraordinary complaisance to Mrs. Oldham; and said to her sister, as arm in arm they went out, Politeness is a charming thing, Caroline!

I don't quite understand it, replied the other.

They did not intend their brother should hear

what they said: but he did; and turned back to them (Mrs. Oldham being at a distance, and, on his speaking low, dropping still further behind them): Don't you, my sisters, do too little, and I will not do too much. She is a gentlewoman. She is unhappy from *within*. Thank God, *you* are not. And she is not now, nor ever was, your servant.

They reddened, and looked upon each other in some confusion.

He pressed each of their hands, as in love. Don't let me give you concern, said he; only permit me to remind you, while it is yet in time, that you have an opportunity given you to shew yourselves Grandisons.

When they came to the chamber in which Sir Thomas died, and which was his usual apartment, Mrs. Oldham turned pale, and begged to be excused attending them in it. She wept. You will find every-thing there, Sir, said she, to be as it ought. I am ready to answer all questions. Permit me to wait in the adjoining drawing-room.

Sir Charles allowed her request.

Poor woman! said he: how unhappily circumstanced is she, that she dares not, in *this* company, shew the tenderness, which is the glory, not only of the female, but of the human nature!

In one of the cabinets in that chamber they found a beautiful little casket, and a paper wafered upon the back of it; with these words written in Sir Thomas's hand, *My wife's jewels*, &c.

The key was tied to one of the silver handles.

Had you not my mother's jewels divided between you? asked he.

My father once shewed us this casket at Grandison-hall, answered Caroline. We thought it was still there.

My dear sisters, let me ask you: Did my father

forbear presenting these to you, from any declared *misapprehension* of your want of duty to him?

No, replied Miss Caroline. But he told us, they should be ours when we married. You have heard, I dare say, that he was not fond of seeing us dressed.

It must have been *misapprehension* only, had it been so. You could not be undutiful to a *father*.

He would not permit it to be opened before him: but, presenting it to them, Receive your right, my sisters. It is heavy. I hope there is more than jewels in it. I know that my mother used to deposit in it her little hoard. I am sure there can be no dispute between such affectionate sisters, on the partition of the contents of this casket.

While their brother was taking minutes of papers, the ladies retired to open the casket.

They found three purses in it; in one of which was an India bond of 500l. inclosed in a paper, thus inscribed by Lady Grandison—*From my maiden money.* 120 Carolus's were also in this purse in two papers; the one inscribed, *From my aunt Mary*; the other, *From my aunt Catharine.*

In the second purse were 115 Jacobus's, in a paper, thus inscribed by the same lady, *Presents made at different times by my honoured mother, Lady W.* three bank-notes, and an India bond, to the amount of 300l.

The third purse was thus labelled, as Lady L. shewed me by a copy she had of it in her memorandum book.

"*For my beloved son:* In acknowledgment of his duty to his father and me from infancy to this hour, Jan. 1, 17...—Of his love to his sisters—Of the generosity of his temper; never once having taken advantage of the indulgence shewn

him by parents so fond of him, that, as the only son of an ancient family, he might have done what he pleased with them—Of his love of truth: and of his modesty, courage, benevolence, steadiness of mind, docility, and other great and amiable qualities, by which he gives a moral assurance of making A GOOD MAN. —GOD grant it. Amen!"

The ladies immediately carried this purse, thus labelled, to their brother. He took it; read the label, turning his face from his sisters, as he read;—Excellent woman! said he, when he had read it, *Being dead, she speaks.* May her pious prayer be answered! looking up. Then opening the purse, he found five coronation-medals of different princes in it, and several others of value; a gold snuff-box, in which, wrapt in cotton, were three diamond rings; one signified to be his grandfather's; the two others, an uncle's and brother's of Lady Grandison: but what was more valuable to him than all the rest, the ladies said, was a miniature picture of his mother, set in gold; an admirable likeness, they told me; and they would get their brother to let me see it.

Neglecting all the rest, he eagerly took it out of the shagreen case; gazed at it in silence; kissed it; a tear falling from his eye. He then put it to his heart: withdrew for a few moments; and returned with a cheerful aspect.

The ladies told him what was in the other two purses. They said they made no scruple of accepting the jewels; but the bonds, the notes, and the money, they offered to him.

He asked, If there were no particular direction upon either? They answered, No.

He took them; and emptying them upon the

table, mingled the contents of both together: there may be a difference in the value of each: thus mingled, you, my sisters, will equally divide them between you. This picture (putting his hand on his bosom, where it yet was) is of infinitely more value than all the three purses contained besides.

You will excuse these particularities, my dear friends: but if you do not, I can't help it. We are all apt, I believe, to pursue the subjects that most delight us. Don't grudgé me my pleasure! Perhaps I shall pay for it. I admire this man more than I can express.

Saturday night—And *no* Sir Charles Grandison. With all my heart.

LETTER XXI.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

WHEN Sir Charles and his sisters had looked over every other place in his father's apartment, they followed Mrs. Oldham to hers.

A very handsome apartment, upon my word!

How *could* Miss Grandison—She knew the situation the unhappy woman had been in: mistress of that house.

Her brother looked at her.

Mrs. Oldham shewed them which of the furniture and pictures (some of the latter valuable ones) she had brought into the house, saved, as she said, from the wreck of her husband's fortune—But, said she, with the consent of creditors. I, for *my part*, did not wrong any body.

In that closet, Sir, continued she, pointing to it, is all that I account myself worth in the world. Mr.

Grandison was pleased to put his seal upon the door. I besought him to let me take 50l. out of it; having but very little money about me: but he would not: his refusal, besides the disgrace, has put me to some shifts. But, weeping, I throw myself upon your mercy, Sir.

The sisters frankly owned, that they hardened each other by fault-finding. They whispered, that she expected no mercy from *them*, it was plain. O what a glory belongs to goodness, as well in its influences, as in itself! Not even these two amiable sisters, as Miss Charlotte once acknowledged, were so noble in themselves before their brother's arrival, as they are now.

Assure yourself of justice, madam, said Sir Charles. Mr. Grandison is hasty: but he would have done you justice, I dare say. He thought he was acting for a trust.—You may have letters, you may have things, here in this closet, that we have no business with.—Then, breaking the seal—I leave it to you, to shew us any-thing proper for us to take account of. The rest I wish not to see.

My ladies, Sir—They will be pleased to—

YES, Mrs. Oldham, said Caroline: and was putting herself before her brother, and so was her sister, while Sir Charles was withdrawing from the closet: but he took each by her hand, interrupting Caroline—

NO, *Mrs. Oldham*—Do you lay out things as you please; we will step into the next apartment.

He accordingly led them both out.

You are very generous, Sir, said Miss Grandison.

I *would* be so, Charlotte. Ought not the private drawers of women to be sacred?

But such a *creature*, Sir—said Miss Caroline—

Every creature is intitled to justice—Can ladies forget decorum? You see she was surprised by Mr.

Grandison. She has suffered disgrace: has been put to difficulties.

Well, Sir, if she will do *justice*—

Remember (with looks of meaning) whose *housekeeper* she was.

They owned they were daunted [and so, dear ladies, you ought to have been] but not convinced at that instant. It is generous to own this, ladies; because the behaviour makes not for your honour.

Mrs. Oldham, with tears in her eyes, came courtesying to the ladies and their brother, offering to conduct them into her closet. They found, that she had spread on her table in it, and in the two windows, and in the chairs, letters, papers, laces, fine linen, &c.

These papers, Sir, said she, belong to you. I was *bid* to keep them safe [Poor woman! she knew not how to say, *by whom* bid.] You will see, Sir, the seals are whole.

Perhaps a *will*, said he.

No, Sir, I believe not. I was told they belonged to the Irish estate. Alas! and she wiped her eyes, I have reason to think, there was not time for a will—

I suppose, Mrs. Oldham, you *urged* for a will— said Miss Charlotte.

Indeed, ladies, I often did; I own it.

I don't doubt it, said Miss Caroline.

And very *prudently*, said Sir Charles. I myself have always had a will by me. I should think it a kind of *presumption* to be a week without one.

In this drawer, Sir, are the money, and notes, and securities, that I have been getting together; I do assure you, Sir, very honestly—pulling out a drawer in the cabinet.

To what amount, Mrs. Oldham, if I may be so *bold?* asked Caroline.

No matter, sister Caroline, to what amount, said Sir Charles. You hear Mrs. Oldham say, they are honestly got together. I dare say, that my father's bounty enabled even his meanest *servants* to save money. I would not keep one, that I thought did not. I make no comparisons, Mrs. Oldham: you are a gentlewoman.

The two ladies only whispered to each other, as they owned, *So we think!*—Were there ever such perverse girls? I am afraid my uncle will think himself justified by them on this occasion, when he asserts, that it is one of the most difficult things in the world to put a woman right, when she sets out wrong. If it be generally so with us, I am sure we ought to be very careful of prepossession.—And has he not said, Lucy, that the best women, when wrong, are most tenacious? It may be so: but then, I hope, he will allow, that at the time they *think* themselves right.

I believe there is near 1200l. said Mrs. Oldham, and looked, the ladies observed, as if she was afraid of their censures.

Near 1200l. Mrs. Oldham! said Miss Charlotte. —Lord, sister, how glad would we have been sometimes of as many shillings between us!

And what, Caroline, what, Charlotte, young ladies as you were, only growing up into women, and in your father's house, would you have done with more than current money? Now you have a claim to independency, I hope that 1200l. will not be the sum of either of your stores.

They courtesied, they said; but yet thought 1200l. a great saving.—Dear ladies! how could you forget, and what a pain would it have been for your brother to have reminded you, that Mrs. Oldham had *two* children; to say nothing of a third!

Trembling, as they owned, Here, said she, in this

private drawer, are some presents—I disclaim them. If you believe me, ladies, I never wished for them. I never was seen in them but once. I never shall wear them—offering to pull out the drawer.

Forbear, Mrs. Oldham. Presents are yours. The money in that drawer is yours. Never will I either disparage or diminish my father's bounty. He had a right to do as he pleased. Have not we, to do as we please? Had he made a will, would they not have been yours?—If you, Mrs. Oldham, if you, my sisters, can tell me of any-thing he but intended or inclined to do by any one of his people, that intention will I execute with as much exactness, as if he had made a will, and it was part of it. Shall we do nothing but *legal* justice?—The law was not made for a man of conscience.

Lord bless me, my Lucy! what shall I do about this man?

* *

Here (would you believe it?) I laid down my pen; pondered, and wept, for *joy;* I think, it *was* for joy, that there is such a young man in the world; for what else could it be?—And now, with a watery eye, twinkle, twinkle, do I resume it.

His sisters owned, they were confounded; but that still the time was to come when they were to approve, from their hearts, of what he said and did.

Mrs. Oldham wept at his goodness. She wept, I make no doubt also, as a penitent.—If my ladies, said she, will be pleased to—And seemed to be about making an offer to them—of the jewels, as I suppose.

My sisters, Mrs. Oldham, said Sir Charles, interrupting her, are Grandisons. Pray, madam—holding in her hand, which was extended to the drawer—

She took out of another drawer 40l. and some silver. This, Sir, is money that belongs to you. I

received it in Sir Thomas's illness. I have some other moneys; and my accounts wanted but a few hours of being perfected, when I was dismissed. They shall be completed, and laid before you.

Let this money, Mrs. Oldham, be a part of those accounts; declining, then, to take it.

There are letters, Sir, said she. I would withhold nothing from you. I know not, if, among some things, that I wish not *any-body* to see, there are not concerns, that you ought to be made acquainted with, relating to persons and things, particularly to Mr. Bever and Mr. Filmer, and their accounts. I *hope* they are good men—You must see these letters, I believe.

Let me desire you, Mrs. Oldham, to make such extracts from those letters, or any others, as you think will concern me; and as soon as you can: for those gentlemen have written to me to sign their accounts; which, they hint, had my father's approbation.

She then told Sir Charles (as I have already related) how earnest Mr. Bever was to get to the speech of Sir Thomas; and how mortified Mr. Filmer was to find him incapable of writing his name; which both said was all that was wanted.

An honest man, said Sir Charles, fears not inspection. They shall want no favour from me. I hope nothing but justice from them.

She then shewed him some other papers; and, while he was turning them over, the ladies and she withdrew to another apartment, in which, in two mahogany chests, was her wardrobe. They owned they were curious to inspect it, as she had always made a great figure. She was intending to oblige them; and had actually opened one of the chests, and, though reluctantly, taken out a gown, when Sir Charles entered.

He seemed displeased; and, taking his sisters aside, Tell me, said he, can what this poor woman seems to be about, proceed from her own motion? I beg of you to say, you put her upon it. I would not have reason to imagine, that any woman, in such circumstances, could make a display of her apparel.

Why, the motion is partly mine, I must needs say, anwered Charlotte.

Wholly, I hope; and the compliance owing to the poor woman's mortified situation. You are young women. You may not have considered this matter. Do you imagine, that your curiosity will yield you pleasure? Don't you know what to expect from the magnificent and bountiful spirit of him, to whose memory you owe duty?

They recollected themselves, blushed, and desired Mrs. Oldham to lock up the chest. She did; and seemed pleased to be excused from the mortifying task.

Ah, my Lucy, one thing I am afraid of; and that is, that Sir Charles Grandison, politely as he behaves to us all, thinks us women in general very contemptible creatures. I wish I knew that he did; and that for two reasons: that I might have something to think him blameable for: and to have the pride of assuring myself, that he would be convinced of that fault, were he to be acquainted with my grandmamma, and aunt.

But, do you wonder, that the sisters, whose minds were thus opened and enlarged by the example of such a brother, blazing upon them all at once, as I may say, in manly goodness, on his return from abroad, whither he set out a stripling, should, on all occasions, break out into raptures, whenever they mention THEIR brother?—Well may Miss Grandison despise her lovers, when she thinks of him and of them at the same time.

Sunday. Sir Charles is in town, we hear: came thither but last night—Nay, for that matter, his sisters are more vexed at him than I am.—But what pretence have I to be disturbed? But I say of him, as I do of Lady D.: he is so good, that one would be willing to stand well with him.—Then he is my *brother*, you know.

LETTER XXII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

After Sir Charles had inspected into every-thing in this house, and taken minutes of papers, letters, writings, &c. and locked up the plate, and other valuables, in one room, he ordered his servants to carry into Mrs. Oldham's apartment all that belonged to her; and gave her the key of that; and directed the housekeeper to be assisting to her in the removal of them, at her own time and pleasure, and to suffer her to come and go, at all times, with freedom and civility, as if she had never *left the house*, were his words.

How the poor woman courtesied and wept! The dear girls, I am afraid, then envied her—and perhaps expressed a grudging spirit; for they said, this was their brother's address to them at the time:

You may look upon the justice I aim at doing to persons who can claim *only* justice from me, as an earnest, that I will do *more* than justice to my beloved sisters: and you should have been the first to have found the fruits of the love I bear you, had I not been afraid, that prudence would have narrowed my intentions. The moment I know what I can do, I will do it; and I request you to hope largely: if I have ability, I will exceed your hopes.

My dear sisters, continued he, and took one hand of each, I am sorry, for your *spirits'* sake, that you are left in my power. The best of women was always afraid it would be so. But the moment I can, I will give you an absolute independence on your brother, that your actions and conduct may be all your own.

Surely, Sir, said Caroline (and they both wept) we must think it the highest felicity, that we *are* in the power of such a brother. As to our *spirits*, Sir—

She would have said more; but could not; and Charlotte took it up where her sister left off: Best of brothers, said she—Our *spirits* shall, as much as possible (I can answer for both) be guided hereafter by yours. Forgive what you have seen amiss in us—But we *desire* to depend upon our good behaviour. We cannot, we will not, be independent of you.

We will talk of these matters, replied he, when we can do *more* than talk. I will ask you, Caroline, after your inclinations; and you, Charlotte, after *yours*, in the same hour that I know what I can do for you both, in the way of promoting them. Enter, mean time, upon your measures: reckon upon my best assistance: banish suspense. One of my first pleasures will be, to see you both happily married.

They did not *say*, when they related this to me, that they threw themselves at his feet, as to their better father, as well as brother: but I fancy they *did*.

He afterwards, at parting with Mrs. Oldham, said, I would be glad to know, madam, how you dispose of yourself: every unhappy person has a right to the good offices of those who are less embarrassed. When you are settled, pray let me know the manner: and if you acquaint me with the state of your

affairs, and what you propose to do for and with those who are intitled to your first care, your confidence in me will not be misplaced.

And pray, and pray, asked I of the ladies, what said Mrs. Oldham? How did she behave upon this?—

Our Harriet is strangely taken with Mrs. Oldham's story, said Miss Grandison—Why she wept plentifully, you may be sure. She clasped her hands, and kneeled to pray to God to bless him, and all that—She could not do otherwise.

See, Lucy!—But am I, my grandmamma, am I, my aunt, to blame? Is it inconsistent with the strictest virtue to be charmed with such a story?—May not virtue itself pity the lasped?—O yes, it may! I am sure, you, and Sir Charles Grandison, will say it may. A while ago, I thought myself a poor creature, compared to these two ladies: but now I *believe* I am as good as they in some things.—But *they* had not such a grandmamma and aunt as I am blessed with: *they* lost their excellent mother, while they were young; and their brother is but lately come over: and his superior excellence, like sunshine, breaking out on a sudden, finds out, and brings to sight, those spots and freckles, that were hardly before discoverable.

Sir Charles desired Mrs. Oldham would give in writing what she proposed to do for herself, and for those *who were under her care*. She did, at her first opportunity. It was, That she purposed going to London, for the sake of the young people's education: of turning into money what jewels, clothes, and plate, she should think above her then situation in life: of living retired in a little way: and she gave in an estimate of her worth: to what amount the ladies knew not: but this they know, that their brother allows her an annuity, for the sake of her

sons by his father: and they doubt not but he will be still kinder to them, when they are old enough to be put into the world.

This the ladies think an encouragement to a guilty life. I will not dare to pronounce upon it, because I may be thought partial to the generous man: but should be glad of my uncle's opinion. This, however, may be said, That Sir Charles Grandison has no vices of his own to cover by the extensiveness of his charity and beneficence; and if it be not goodness in him to do thus, it is greatness; and this, if it be not praise-worthy, is the first instance that I have known goodness and greatness of soul separable.

The brother and sisters went down, after this, to Grandison-hall: and Sir Charles had reason to be pleased with the good order in which he found every-thing there.

LETTER XXIII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

THE next thing the ladies mentioned was, Sir Charles's management with the two stewards.

I will not aim at being very particular in this part of the family-history.

When Sir Charles found that his father had left the inspection of each steward's account to the other, he entered into the examination of the whole himself: and though he allowed them several disputable and unproved charges, he brought them to acknowledge a much greater balance in his favour, than they had made themselves debtors for. This was the use he made of detecting them, to his sisters.—You see, sisters, that my father was not so profuse as some

people thought him. He had partners in his estate; and I have reason to think that he often paid interest for his own money.

On his settling with Filmer, the treaty with Miss Obrien came out. Mr. Filmer had, by surprise, brought that beautiful girl into Sir Charles's presence; and he owned to his sisters, that she was a very lovely creature.

But when the mother and aunt found, that he only admired her as a man would a fine picture, they insisted that Sir Thomas had promised to marry Miss Obrien privately; and produced two of his letters to her, that seemed to give ground for such an expectation. Sir Charles was grieved, for the sake of his father's memory, at this transaction; and much more on finding that the unhappy man went down to his seat in Essex, his head and heart full of this scheme, when he was struck with his last illness.

A meeting was proposed by Filmer, between Sir Charles, the mother, the aunt, and himself, at the aunt's house in Pallmall. Sir Charles was very desirous to conceal his father's frailty from the world. He met them: but before he entered into discourse, made it his request to be allowed half an hour's conversation with Miss Obrien by herself; at the same time, praising, as it deserved, her beauty.

They were in hopes, that she would be able to make an impression on the heart of so young and so lively a man; and complied. Under pretence of preparing her for so unexpected a visit, her aunt gave her her cue: but, instead of her captivating him, he brought her to such confessions, as sufficiently let him into the baseness of their views.

He returned to company, the young woman in his hand. He represented to the mother the wickedness of the part she had come over to act, in such

strong terms, that she fell into a fit. The aunt was terrified. The young creature wept; and vowed that she would be honest.

Sir Charles told them, That if they would give him up his father's two letters, and make a solemn promise never to open their lips on the affair; and would procure for her an honest husband, he would give her 1000l. on the day of marriage; and, if she made a good wife, would be further kind to her.

Filmer was very desirous to clear himself of having any hand in the blacker part of this plot. Sir Charles did not seem solicitous to detect and expose him: but left the whole upon his conscience. And having made before several objections to his account, which could not be so well obviated in England, he went over to Ireland with Filmer; and there very speedily settled every-thing to his own satisfaction; and, dismissing him more genteelly than he deserved, took upon himself the management of that estate, directing several obvious improvements to be made; which are likely to turn to great account.

On his return, he heard that Miss Obrien was ill of the small-pox. He was not, for her own sake, sorry for it. She suffered in her face, but still was pretty and genteel: and she is now the honest and happy wife of a tradesman near Golden Square; who is very fond of her. Sir Charles gave with her the promised sum, and 100l. more for wedding clothes.

One part of her happiness and her husband's is, that her aunt, supposing she had disgraced herself by this match, never comes near her: and her mother is returned to Ireland to her husband, greatly dissatisfied with her daughter on the same account.

While these matters were agitating, Sir Charles forgot not to enquire what steps had been taken with

regard to the alliance proposed between himself and Lady Frances N.

He paid his first visit to the father and brother of that lady.

All that the sisters know of the matter, is, that the treaty was, on this first visit, entirely broken off. Their brother, however, speaks of the lady, and of the whole family, with great respect. The lady is known to esteem him highly. Her father, her brother, speak of him every-where with great regard: Lord N. calls him the finest young gentleman in England. And so, Lucy, I believe he is. Sir Charles Grandison, Lord N. once said, knows better by non-compliance, how to create friendships, than most men do by compliance.

Lady L. and Miss Grandison, who, as I have before intimated, favour another lady, once said to him, that the earl and his son Lord N. were so constantly speaking in his praise, that they could not but think that it would at last be a match between him and Lady Frances. His answer was, The lady is infinitely deserving: *but it cannot be.*

I am ready to wish, he would say, what *can* be, that we need not—Ah, Lucy!—I know not what I would say: but so it will always be with silly girls, that distinguish not between the *would* and the *should*: one of which, is your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXIV.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

I WILL proceed with the family-history.

Sir Charles forgot not, on his arrival in England, to pay an early visit to Lord W. his mother's brother, who was then at his house near Windsor.

I have told you, that my lord had conceived a dislike to him; and that for no other reason but because his father loved him. Lord W. was laid up with the gout when he came: but he was instantly admitted to his stately presence. The first salutations, on one side, were respectful; on the other, coldly civil. My lord often surveyed his kinsman from head to foot, as he sat; as if he were loth to like him, I suppose; yet knew not how to help it. He found fault with Sir Thomas. Sir Charles told him, That it was a very ingrateful thing to him to hear his father spoken slightly of. He desired his lordship to forbear reflections of that sort. My father, said he, is no more. I desire not to be made a party in any disputes that may have happened between him and your lordship. I come to attend you as a duty which I owe to my mother's memory; and I hope this may be done without wounding that of my father.

You say well, said my lord; but I am afraid, kinsman, by your air and manner, and *speech* too, that you want not your father's proud spirit.

I revere my father for his spirit, my lord. It might not always be exerted as your lordship, and his other relations, might wish: but he had a manly one. As to myself, I will help your lordship to my character at once. I am, indeed, a very proud man. I cannot stoop to flatter, and, least of all men, the

great and the rich: finding it difficult to restrain this fault, it is my whole study to direct it to laudable ends; and I hope, that I am too proud to do anything unworthy of my father's name, or of my mother's virtue.

Why, Sir (and looked at him again from head to foot) your father never in his whole life said so good a thing.

Your lordship knew not my father as he deserved to be known. Where there are misunderstandings between two persons, though relations, the character of either is not to be taken from the other. But, my lord, this is, as I said before, a visit of duty: I have nothing to ask of your lordship, but your good opinion; and that no longer than I deserve it.

My lord was displeased. "You have nothing to ask of me!"—repeated he. Let me tell you, *independent* Sir, that I like not your speech.. You may leave me, if you please: and when I want to see you again, I will send for you.

Your servant, my lord. And let me say, that I will not again attend you, till you do. But *when* you do, the summons of my *mother's brother* shall be cheerfully obeyed, notwithstanding this unkind treatment of *Lord W*.

The very next day, my lord, hearing he was still at Windsor, viewing the curiosities of the place, sent to him: he directly went. My lord expressed himself highly pleased with his readiness to come, and apologized to him for his behaviour of the day before. He called him nephew, and swore, that he was just such a young man as he had wished to see. Your mother used to say, proceeded he, that you could do what you would with her, should you even be unreasonable: and I beg of you to ask me no favour but what is fit for me to grant, for fear I should grudge it after I had granted it; and call in ques-

tion, what no man is willing to do, my own discretion.

He then asked him about the methods he intended to take with regard to his way of life. Sir Charles answered, That he was resolved to dispose of his racers, hunters, and dogs, as soon as he could: that he would take a survey of the timber upon his estate, and sell that which would be the worse for standing; and doubted not but that a part of it in Hampshire would turn to good account: but that he would plant an oakling for every oak he cut down, for the sake of posterity: he was determined, he said, to lett the house in Essex; and even to sell the estate there, if it were necessary, to clear incumbrances; and to pay off the mortgage upon the Irish estate; which he had a notion was very improveable.

What did he propose to do for his sisters; who were, he found, absolutely in his power?

Marry them, my lord, as soon as I can. I have a good opinion of Lord L. My eldest sister loves him. I will enquire what will make him easy: and easy I will make him, on his marriage with her, if it be in my power. I will endeavour to make the younger happy too. And when these two points are settled, but not before, because I will not deceive the family with which I may engage, I will think of myself.

Bravo! bravo! said my lord; and his eyes, that were brimful some moments before, then ran over. As I hope to be saved, I had a good mind to—to—to—And there he stopt.

I ask only for your approbation, my lord; or correction, if wrong. My father has been very regardful of my interests. He knew my heart, or he would perhaps have been more solicitous for his daughters. I don't find that my circumstances will be very nar-

row: and if they *are*, I will live within compass, and even lay up. I endeavour to make a virtue of my pride, in this respect: I cannot live under obligation. I will endeavour to be just; and then, if I can, I will be generous. That is another species of my pride. I told your lordship, that if I could not conquer it, I would endeavour to make it innocent at least.

Bravo! bravo! again cried my lord—And threw his arms about his neck, and kissed his cheek, though he screamed out at the same time, having hurt his gouty knee with the effort.

And then, and then—said my lord, you will marry yourself. And if you marry with discretion, good Lord, what a *great* man will you be!—And how I shall love you!—Have you any thoughts of marriage, kinsman?—Let me be consulted in your match,—and—and—and—you will vastly oblige me. Now I believe, I shall begin to think the name of Grandison has a very agreeable sound with it. What a fine thing it is, for a young man to be able to clear up his mother's prudence so many years after she is gone, and lessen his father's follies! Your father did not use me well; and I must be allowed sometimes to speak my mind of him.

That, my lord, is the only point on which your lordship and I *can* differ.

Well, well, we *won't* differ—Only one thing, my dear kinsman: if you sell, give me the preference. Your father told me, that he would mortgage to any man upon God's earth sooner than to me. I took that very heinously.

There was a misunderstanding between you, my lord. My father had a noble spirit. He might think, that there would be a selfishness in the appearance, had he asked of your lordship a favour,

Little-spirited men sometimes choose to be obliged to relations, in hopes that payment will be less rigorously exacted, than by a stranger—

Ah kinsman! kinsman!—That's the white side of the business.

Indeed, my lord, that would be a motive with me to avoid troubling your lordship in an exigence, were it to happen. For mistrusts will arise from possibilities of being ungrateful, when perhaps there is no room, were the heart to be known, for the suspicion.

Well said, however. You are a young man that one need not be afraid to be acquainted with. But what would you do as a lender? Would you think hardly of a man that wanted to be obliged to *you*?

O no!—But in this case I would be determined by prudence. If my friend regarded *himself* as the first person in the friendship; *me* but as the second, in cases that might hurt my fortune, and disable me from acting up to my spirit, to other friends; I would then let him know, that he thought as meanly of my understanding as of my justice.

Lord W. was delighted with his nephew's notions. He over and over prophesied, That he would be a great man.

Sir Charles, with wonderful dispatch, executed those designs, which he had told Lord W. he would carry into effect. And the sale of the timber he cut down in Hampshire, and which lay convenient for water-carriage, for the use of the government, furnished him with a very considerable sum.

I have mentioned, that Sir Charles on his setting out for Florence to Paris, to attend his father's leave for his coming to England, had left his ward Miss Jervois, at the former place, in the protection of good Dr. Bartlett. He soon sent for them both over, and placed the young lady with a discreet

widow-gentlewoman, who had three prudent daughters; sometimes indulging her with leave to visit his sisters, who are very fond of her, as you have heard. And now let me add, That she is an humble petitioner to me, to procure her the felicity, as she calls it, to be constantly resident with Miss Grandison. She will be, she says, the best girl in the world, if she may be allowed this favour: and not one word of advice, either of her guardian, or of Miss Grandison, or of Lady L. shall be lost upon her—And besides, as good women, said she, as Mrs. Lane and her daughters *are*, what protection can women give me, were my unhappy mother to be troublesome, and resolve to *have me*, as she is continually threatening?

What a new world opens to me, my Lucy, from the acquaintance I am permitted to hold with this family! God grant that your poor Harriet pay not too dearly for her knowledge!—She *would*, I believe you think, were she to be *entangled in a hopeless love.*

LETTER XXV.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Lord L. came to town from Scotland within two or three months of Sir Charles's arrival in England. His first visit was to the young baronet; who, on my lord's avowing his passion for his sister, and her acknowledging her esteem for him, introduced him to her, and put their hands together, holding them between both his: With pleasure, said he, I join hands where hearts so worthy are united. Do me, my lord, the honour, from this moment, to look

upon me as your brother. My father, I find, was a little embarrassed in his affairs. He loved his daughters, and perhaps was loth that they should early claim *another* protection : but had he lived to make himself easy, I have no doubt, but he would have made them happy. He has left that duty upon me —And I will perform it.

His sister was unable to speak for joy. My lord's tears were ready to start.

My father, proceeded Sir Charles, in one of his letters to me, acquainted me with the state of your lordship's affairs. Reckon upon my best services: promise, engage, undertake. The brother, my lord, hopes to make you easy: the sister will make you happy.

Miss Charlotte was affected with this scene; and she prayed, with her hands and eyes lifted up, that God would make his power as large as his heart: the whole world would then, she said, be benefited either by his bounty, or his example.

Do you wonder now, my dear Mr. Reeves, that Miss Grandison, Lady L. and Lord L. know not how to contain their gratitude, when this beneficent-minded brother is spoken of?

And has not my Charlotte, said he, turning towards her, and looking at Miss Caroline, some happy man, that she can distinguish by her love? You are *equally* dear to me, my sisters. Make me your confident, Charlotte. Your inclinations shall be my choice.

Dear Miss Grandison, why did you mislead me by your boasts of unreservedness? What room was there for reserves to such a brother?—And yet it is plain, you have not let him know all your *heart*; and he seems to think so too. And now you are uneasy at a hint he has thrown out of that nature.

Two months before the marriage, Sir Charles put

into his sister's hands a paper sealed up. Receive these, my Caroline, said he, as from your father's bounty, in compliance with what your mother would have wished, had we been blessed with her life. When you oblige Lord L. with one hand, make him, with the other, this present: and intitle *yourself* to all the gratitude, with which I know his worthy heart will overflow, on *both* occasions. I have done but my duty. I have performed only an article of the will, which I have made in my mind for my father, as time was not lent to make one for himself.

He saluted her, and withdrew, before she broke the seal: and when she did, she found in it bank-notes for 10,000l.

She threw herself into a chair, and was unable for some time to stir; but recovering herself, hurried out to find her brother. She was told, he was in her sister's apartment. She found him not there, but Charlotte in tears. Sir Charles had just left her. What ails my Charlotte?

O this brother, my Caroline!—There is no bearing his generous goodness. See that deed! See that paper that lies upon it! She took it up; and these were the contents of the paper:

" I have just now paid my sister Caroline the sum that I think she would have been intitled to expect from my father's bounty, and the family circumstances, had life been lent him to settle his affairs, and make a will. I have an entire confidence in the discretion of my Charlotte: and have, by the inclosed deed, established for her, beyond the power of revocation, that independency as to fortune, to which, from my father's death, I think her intitled. And for this, having acted but as an executor, I claim no merit, but that of having fulfilled the supposed will of either of our parents, as either had

survived the other. Cherish, therefore, in your grateful heart, *their* memory. Remember, that when you marry, you change the name of Grandison. Yet, with all my pride, what is name?—Let the man be worthy of you: and be he who he will that you intitle to your vows, I will embrace him, as the brother of

Your affectionate

CHARLES GRANDISON!

The deed was for the same sum as he had given her sister, and to carry interest.

The two sisters congratulated, and wept over, each other, as if distressed—To be sure, they *were* distressed.

Caroline found out her brother: but when she approached him, could not utter one word of what she had meditated to say: but, dropping down on one knee, blessed him, as she owned, in heart, both for Lord L. and herself; but could only express her gratitude by her lifted-up hands and eyes.

Just as he had raised and seated her, entered to them the equally grateful Charlotte. He placed her next her sister, and drawing a chair for himself, taking a hand of each, he thus addressed himself to them:

My dear sisters, you are *too* sensible of these but *due* instances of my brotherly love. It has pleased God to take from us our father and mother. We are *more* than brothers and sisters; and must supply to each other the wanting relations. Look upon me only as an executor of a will, that *ought* to have been made, and perhaps *would*, had time been given. My circumstances are greater than I expected; greater, I dare say, than my father thought they would be. Less than I have done, could not be done, by a brother who had *power* to do this. You don't

know how much you will oblige me, if you never say one word more on this subject. You will act with less dignity than becomes my sisters, if you look upon what I have done in any other light than as your due.

O my aunt! be so good, as to let the servants prepare my apartment at Selby-house. There is no living within the blazing glory of this man! But, for one's comfort, he seems to have one fault; and he owns it—And yet, does not acknowledgment annihilate that fault!—O no! for he thinks not of *correcting* it. This fault is *pride*. Do you mind *what* a stress he lays now-and-then on the family-name? and, as above, *Dignity,* says he, *that becomes my sisters!*—Proud mortal!—O my Lucy! he *is* proud; *too* proud, I doubt, as well as *too* considerable in his fortunes—What would I say?—Yet, I know who would *study* to make him the happiest of men—Spare me, spare me here, my uncle; or rather, skip over this passage, Lucy.

Sir Charles, at the end of eight months from his father's death, gave Caroline, with his own hand, to Lord L.

Charlotte has two humble servants, Lord G. and Sir Walter Watkyns, as you have seen in my former letters; but likes not either of them.

Lord L. carried his lady down to Scotland, where she was greatly admired and caressed by all his relations. How happy for your Harriet was their critically-proposed return, which carried down Sir Charles and Miss Charlotte to prepare every-thing at Colnebrooke for their reception!

Sir Charles accompanied my Lord and Lady L. as far on their way to Scotland as York; where he made a visit to Mrs. Eleanor Grandison, his father's maiden sister, who resides there. She, having heard of his goodness to his sisters, and to every-body else

with whom he had concerns, longed to see him; and on this occasion rejoiced in the opportunity he gave her to congratulate, to bless, and applaud, her nephew.

What multitudes of things have I further to tell you, relating to this *strange* man!—*Let* me call him names.

I enquired after the history of the good Dr. Bartlett: but the ladies said, As they knew not the whole of it, they would refer me to the doctor himself. They knew however enough, they said, to reverence him as one of the most worthy and most pious of men. They believed, that he knew all the secrets of their brother's heart.

Strange, methinks, that these secrets lie so *deep!* Yet there does not seem any thing so *very* forbidding, either in Sir Charles or the doctor, but that one might ask them a few innocent questions. And yet I did not use to be so very curious neither. Why should I be more so than his sisters?—Yet persons coming strangers into a family of extraordinary merit, are *apt*, I believe, to be more inquisitive about the affairs and particularities of that family, than those who make a part of it: and when they have no other motive for their curiosity, than a desire to applaud and imitate, I see not any great harm in it.

I was also very anxious to know, what, at so early an age (for Sir Charles was not then eighteen) were the faults he found with the governor appointed for him. It seems, the man was not only profligate himself, but, in order to keep himself in countenance, laid snares for the young gentleman's virtue; which, however, he had the happiness to escape; though at an age in which youth is generally unguarded. This man was also contentious, quarrelsome, and a drinker; and yet (as Sir Charles at the time acknowledged

to his sisters) it had so very indifferent an appearance, for a young man to find fault with his governor, that, as well for the appearance-sake, as for the man's, he was very loth to complain, till he became insupportable. It was mentioned, as it ought, greatly to the honour of the young gentleman's frankness and magnanimity, that when, at last, he found himself obliged to complain of this wicked man to his father, he gave him a copy of the letter he wrote, as soon as he sent it away. You may make, Sir, said he, what use you please of the step I have taken. You see my charge. I have not aggravated it. Only, let me caution you, that, as I have not given you by my own misconduct any advantage over me, you do not make a still worse figure in my reply, if you give me occasion to justify my charge. My father loves his son. I *must* be his son. An altercation cannot end in your favour.

But, on enquiry into the behaviour of this bad man (who might have tainted the morals of one of the finest youths on earth) which the son besought the father to make, before he paid any regard to his complaints, Sir Thomas dismissed him, and made a compliment to his son, that he should have no other governor for the future, than his own discretion*.

Miss Jervois's history is briefly this:

She had one of the best of fathers: her mother is one of the worst of women. A termagant, a swearer, a drinker, unchaste—Poor Mr. Jervois!—I have told you, that he (a meek man) was obliged to abandon his country, to avoid her. Yet she wants to have her daughter under her own tuition—Terrible!—Sir Charles has had trouble with her. He expects to have more—Poor Miss Jervois!

* See further, Letter XXXVII.

Miss Emily's fortune is very great. The ladies say, not less than 50,000l. Her father was an Italian and Turkey merchant; and Sir Charles, by his management, has augmented it to that sum, by the recovery of some thousands of pounds, which Mr. Jervois had thought desperate.

* *

And thus have I brought down, as briefly as I was able, though writing almost night and day (and greatly indulged in the latter by the ladies, who saw my heart was in the task,) the history of this family, to the time when I had the happiness (by means, however, most shockingly undesirable) to be first acquainted with it.

And now a word or two to present situations.

Sir Charles is not yet come down, Lucy. And this is Monday!—Very well!—He has made excuses by his cousin Grandison, who came down with my cousin Reeves on Sunday morning;—Vastly busy, no doubt!—He will be here to-morrow, I *think*, he says. His excuses were to his sisters and Lord L. I am glad he did not give himself the importance with your Harriet, to make any to her on his absence.

Miss Grandison complains, that I open not my heart to her. She wants, she says, to open hers to me; but as she has intricacies that I cannot have, she says I must *begin*: she knows not *how*, she pretends. What her secrets may be, I presume not to guess: but surely I cannot tell a sister, who, with *her* sister, favours another woman, that I have a regard for her brother; and that before I can be sure he has any for me.

She will play me a trick, she just now told me, if I will not let her know who the happy man in Northamptonshire is, whom I prefer to all others. That there *is* such a one *somewhere*, she says, she has no

doubt: and if she find it out before I tell her, she will give me *no quarter*, speaking in the military phrase; which sometimes she is apt to do. Lady L. smiles, and eyes me with great attention, when her sister is raillying me, as if she, also, wanted to find out some reason for my refusing Lord D. I told them an hour ago, that I am beset with their eyes, and Lord L.'s; for Lady L. keeps no one secret of her heart, nor, I believe, any body's else that she is mistress of, from her lord. Him, I think, of all the men I know (my uncle not excepted) I could soonest entrust with a secret. But have I, Lucy, any to reveal? It is, I hope, a secret to myself, that never will be unfolded, even *to* myself, that I love a man, who has not made professions of love to me. As to Sir Charles Grandison—But have done, Harriet! Thou hast named a name, that will lead thee —Whither will it lead me?

More than I am at present my own, I am, and will be ever, my dear Lucy,

Your affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXVI.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Monday, March 13.

I WILL now tell you, who the lady is, to whom the two sisters have given their interest.

It is Lady Anne S. the only daughter of the Earl of S. A vast fortune, it seems, independent of her father; and yet certain of a very great one from him. She is to be here this very afternoon, on a visit to the two ladies. With all my heart. I hope she is

a very agreeable lady. I hope she has a capacious mind. I hope—I don't know what to hope—And why? Because I find myself out to be a selfish wretch, and don't wish her to be so fine and so good a woman, as I *say* I do. Is love, if I *must* own love, a narrower of the heart?—I don't know whether, while it is in suspense, and is only on one side, it be not the parent of jealousy, envy, dissimulation; making the person pretend generosity, disinterestedness, and I cannot tell what, but secretly wishing, that her rival may not be so worthy, so lovely, as she pretends to wish her to be.—Ah! Lucy, were one *sure*, one could afford to be *generous*: one might then look down with pity upon a rival, instead of being mortified with apprehensions of being looked down upon.

But I will be just to the education given me, and the examples set me. Whatever I shall be able to do, or to wish, while I am in *suspense*; when any happy woman becomes the wife of Sir Charles Grandison, I will revere her; and wish her, for his sake as well as her own, all the felicities that this world can afford; and if I cannot do this from my heart, I will disown that heart.

The two ladies set upon Mr. Grandison on Sunday, to get out of him the business that carried Sir Charles so often of late to Canterbury. But though he owned, that he was not injoined secrecy, he affected to amuse them, and strangely to romance; hinted to them a story of a fine woman in love with *him*, and he with *her*; yet neither of them thinking of marriage:' Mr. Grandison valued not truth, nor scrupled solemn words, though ludicrously uttered, to make the most improbable stuff perplexing and teazing; and then the wretch laughed immoderately at the suspense he supposed he had caused.

What witless creatures, what mere nothings, are

these beaux, fine fellows, and laughers, of men!—How silly must they think us women!—And how silly indeed are such of us, as can keep in countenance, at our own expence, their folly!

He was left alone with me for half an hour last night; and, in a very serious manner, besought me to receive his addresses. I was greatly displeased with the two sisters; for I thought they intended to give him this opportunity, by their manner of withdrawing. Surely, thought I, I am not sunk so low in the eyes of the ladies of such a family as this, as to be thought by them a fit wife to the only worthless person in it, because I have not the fortune of Lady Anne S. I will hear, thought I, what Miss Grandison says to this; and although I had made excuses to my cousin Reeves's, at *their* request, for staying here longer than I had intended, I will get away to town as fast as I can. Proud as they are of the name of Grandison, thought I, the name *only* won't do with Harriet Byron. I am as proud as they.

I said nothing of my resentment: but told both ladies, the moment I saw them, of Mr. Grandison's declaration. They expressed themselves highly displeased with him for it; and said, they would talk to him. Miss Grandison said, his fortune was indeed very considerable, notwithstanding the extravagance of his youth: but it was a high degree of confidence, in a man of such free principles, to think himself entitled to countenance from —— in short, from such a lady, as your Harriet, Lucy; whatever you may think of her in these days of her humiliation.

She added the goodness of my heart to her compliment. I hope it is not a bad one. *Then* it was that I told them of my thoughts of going to town on the occasion: and the two ladies instantly went to their cousin, and talked to him in such a manner,

what he promised, if no more notice were taken of the matter, never again to give occasion for them to reprimand him on this subject. He had, indeed, he owned, no very *strong aspirations* after matrimony; and had balanced about it a good while, before he could allow himself to declare his passion so seriously: but only, as it was probable, that he might at one time or other enter the *pale*, he thought he never in his life saw a woman with whom he could be so happy, as with me.

But you see, Lucy, by this address of Mr. Grandison, that nothing is thought of in the family of *another* nature. What makes me a little more affected than otherwise I believe I should be, is, that all you, my dear friends, are so much in love with this really great, because good, man. It is a very happy circumstance for a young woman, to look forward to a change of condition with a man, of whom every one of her relations highly approves. But what can't be, can't. I shall see what merit Lady Anne has by-and-by. But if fortune—Indeed, my dear, were I the first princess on earth, I would have no other man, if I might have him. And so I say, that am but poor Harriet Byron. By this time Lady D. will have taken such measures, I hope, as will not disturb me in my resolution. It is *fixed*, my dear. I cannot help it. I *must* not, I *ought* not, I therefore *will* not, give my *hand*, whatever has passed between that lady and my aunt, to any man living, and leave a preference in my *heart* against that man. Gratitude, justice, virtue, decency, all forbid it.

And yet, as I see no hope, nor trace for hope, I have begun to attempt the conquest of my *hopeless*—What shall I call it?—*Passion*—Well, if I *must* call it so, I must. A *child in love matters*, if I did not, would *find me out*, you know. Nor will I, how-

ever *hopeless*, be ashamed of owning it, if I can help it. Is not reason, is not purity, is not delicacy, with me? Is it *person* that I am in love with, if I *am* in love? No: it is virtue, it is goodness, it is generosity, it is true politeness, that I am captivated by; all centred in this one *good man*. What then have I to be ashamed of?—And yet I *am* a little ashamed now-and-then, for all that.

After all, that love, which is founded on fancy, or exterior advantages, is a love, I should think, that may, and oftentimes *ought* to be overcome: but that which is founded on interior worth; that blazes out when charity, beneficence, piety, fortitude, are signally exerted by the object beloved: how can such a love as that be restrained, damped, suppressed? How can it, without damping every spark of generous goodness, in what my partial grandmamma calls a *fellow heart*, admiring and longing to promote and share in such glorious philanthropy?

Philanthropy!—Yes, my uncle: why should women, in compliance with the petulance of narrow-minded men, forbear to use words that some seem to think above them, when no other single word will equally express their sense? It will be said, they need not *write*. Well then, don't let them *read*: and carry it a little further, and they may be forbidden to *speak*. And every lordly man will then be a Grand Signor, and have his mute attendant.

But won't you think my heart a little at ease, that I can thus trifle? I would fain have it be at ease; and that makes me give way to any cheerful idea that rises to my mind.

The ladies have made me read to them several passages out of my letters to you before I send them. They are more generous than I think I wish them to be, in allowing me to skip and pass over sentences

and paragraphs as I please: for is not this allowing that I have something to write, or have written something that they think I *ought* to keep from their knowledge; and which they do not *desire* to know? With all my heart. I will not be mean, Lucy.

* *

Well, Lucy, Lady Anne has been here, and is gone. She is an agreeable woman. I can't say but she is *very* agreeable. And were she actually Lady Grandison, I think I could respect her. I *think* I could—But O, my dear friends, what a happy creature was I, before I came to London!

There was a good deal of discourse about Sir Charles. She owned, that she thought him the handsomest man she ever saw in her life. She was in love with his great *character*, she said. She could go no-where, but he was the subject. She had heard of the affair between him and Sir Hargrave; and made me a hundred compliments on the occasion; and said, That her having heard, that I was at Colnebrook, was one inducement to her, to make this visit.

It seems, she told Miss Grandison, That she thought me the prettiest creature she ever beheld.—*Creature* was her word—We are all creatures, 'tis true: but I think I never was more displeased with the sound of the word *creature*, than I was from Lady Anne.

* *

My aunt's letter relating to what passed between her and Lady D. is just brought me.

And so Lady D. was greatly chagrined!—I am sorry for it. But, my dear aunt, you say that she is not displeased with me in the main, and commends my sincerity. That, I hope, is but doing me justice. I am very glad to find, that she knew not how to get

over my prepossession in favour of another man. It was worthy of herself, and of my Lord D.'s character. I shall always respect her. I hope this affair is quite over.

My grandmamma regrets the uncertainty I am in: but did she not say herself, that Sir Charles Grandison was too considerable in his fortune; in his merit? That we were but as the private, he the public, in this particular? What room is there then for regret? Why is the word *uncertainty* used? We may be *certain*—And there's an end of it. His sisters can railly me; "Some happy man in Northamptonshire!"—As much as to say, "You must not think of our brother." "Lady Anne S. has a vast fortune." Is not that saying, "What hope can *you* have, Harriet Byron?"—Well, I don't care: this life is but a passage, a short and a dark passage, to a better: and let one justle, and another elbow: another push me, because they know the weakest must give way; yet I will endeavour steadily to pursue my course, till I get through it, and into broad and open day.

One word only more on this subject—There is but one man in the world, whom I can honestly marry, my mind continuing what it is. His I cannot expect to be: I must then of necessity be a single woman as long as I live. Well! And where is the great evil of that? Shall I not have less cares, less anxieties?—I *shall*. And let me beg of my dear friends, that none of you will ever again mention marriage to your

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXVII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Tuesday, March 14.

SIR Charles is come at last! He came time enough to breakfast, and with him the good Dr. Bartlett. My philosophy, I doubt, is gone again, quite gone; for one while at least. I must take sanctuary, and that very soon, at Selby-house.

Every word that passes now, seems to me worth repeating. There is no describing how the presence of this man animates every one in company. But take only part of what passed.

We were in hopes, Sir Charles, said Lord L. that we should have had the pleasure of seeing you before now.

My heart was with you, my lord: and (taking my hand; for he sat next me, and bowing) the more ardently, I must own, for the pleasure I should have shared with you all, in the company of this your lovely guest.

[What business had he to take my hand? But indeed, the character of *brother* might warrant the freedom.]

I was engaged most part of last week in a very melancholy attendance, as Mr. Grandison could have informed you.

But not a word of the matter, said Mr. Grandison, did I tell the ladies; looking at his two cousins. I amused them, as they love to do all mankind, when they have power.

The ladies, I hope, cousin, will punish you for this reflection.

I came not to town till Saturday, and found a billet from Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, inviting himself,

Mr. Merceda, Mr. Bagenhall, and Mr. Jordan, to pass the Sunday evening with me in St. James's Square. The company was not suitable to the day, nor the day to the purposed meeting. I made my excuses, and desired them to favour me at breakfast on Monday morning. They came. And when we were all in good humour with one another, I proposed, and was seconded by Mr. Jordan, that we would make a visit—You will hardly guess to whom, Miss Byron—It was to the widow Awberry at Paddington.

I started, and even trembled. What I suffered there, was all in my mind.

He proceeded then to tell me, that he had, though not without some difficulty on Sir Hargrave's part, actually engaged him to draw upon his banker for the 100l. he had promised Wilson; Mr. Merceda on his banker for 50l. and he himself generously added 50l. more; and, giving, as he said, the air of a frolic to the performance of a promise, they all of them went to Paddington. There, satisfying themselves of the girl's love for Wilson, and of the widow's opinion of Wilson's good intention by the girl; they let them know, that the sum of 200l. was deposited in Sir Charles's hands to be paid on the day of marriage, as a portion for the young woman; and bid them demand it as soon as they thought fit. Neither Wilson nor the widow's son was there. The widow and her daughters were overjoyed at this unexpected good news.

They afterwards shewed Sir Charles, it seems, every scene of my distress; and told him, and the gentlemen, all but Sir Hargrave (who had not patience to hear it, and went into another room) my whole sad story. Sir Charles was pleased to say, That he was so much affected with it, that he had some little difficulty, on joining Sir Hargrave, to be

as civil to him as he was before he heard the relation.

To one condition, it seems, the gentlemen insisted Sir Charles should consent, as an inducement for them to comply with his proposal. It was that Sir Charles should dine with Sir Hargrave and the company at his house on the forest, some one day in the next week, of which they would give him notice: They all insisted upon it; and Sir Charles said, he came the more readily into the proposal, as they declared, it would be the last time they should see him for at least a twelvemonth to come; they being determined to prosecute their intended tour.

Wilson and young Awberry waited on Sir Charles the same evening. The marriage is to be celebrated in a few days. Wilson says, that his widow-sister in Smithfield will, he is sure, admit him into a partnership with her, now that he shall have something to carry into the stock; for she loves his wife-elect; and the saving both of body and soul will be owing, he declared (with transport that left him speechless) to Sir Charles Grandison.

Every body was delighted with the relation he gave. Dear Sir Charles, said Mr. Grandison, let me be allowed to believe the Roman catholic doctrine of supererogation; and let me express my hope, that I, your kinsman, may be the better for your good works. If all you do, is but necessary, the Lord have mercy upon me!

Miss Grandison said, if I had written to my friends the account of what I suffered from the vile attempt of Sir Hargrave, as she doubted not but I had, Lady L. as well as herself, would take it for a particular mark of my confidence, if they might be allowed to peruse it.

When I am favoured, replied I, with the return of my letters, I will very cheerfully communicate to

you, my dear ladies, my relation of this shocking affair.

They all expressed a pleasure in my frankness. Sir Charles said, he admired me beyond expression, for that noble criterion of innocence and goodness.

There, Lucy!

I think there is nothing in that part, but what they may see.

LETTER XXVIII.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

The two sisters and Lord L. were then solicitous to know what was the occasion, which he called melancholy, that had engaged his attendance so many days at Canterbury.

It is *really* a melancholy occasion, replied he. You must not be surprised, my lord, nor you, my sisters, if you see me in mourning in a few days. His sisters started. And so, *truly*, must I. But I am his third sister, you know. He seemed in haste to explain himself, lest he should keep us in painful suspense. My journeyings to Canterbury have been occasioned by the melancholy necessity of visiting a sick friend, who is now no more.

You had all such an opinion, said Mr. Grandison, that I could keep no secret, that—

You were resolved, interrupted Miss Grandison, to say any-thing but the truth. Indeed, cousin, you had better have been silent at this time.—Is there a necessity, brother, for *us* to go into mourning?

There is not. I had a true value for the departed. But custom will oblige me to mourn outwardly,

as an *executor* only. And I have given orders about that, and other necessary matters.

Did we know the deceased gentleman, brother? said Lady L.

No. His name was Danby. He was an eminent merchant; an Englishman; but, from his youth, settled in France. He had for months been in a languishing state of health; and at last, finding his recovery desperate, was desirous to die in his native country. He landed at Dover about two months ago: but his malady so greatly increased, that he was obliged to stop at Canterbury in his way to town; and there at last he yielded to the common destiny. The body was to be brought to town as this night. I have ordered it to an undertaker's. I must lock myself up for a day or two, when I go to town. His concerns are large; but, he told me, not intricate. He desired, that his will might not be opened till after his interment; and that that might be private. He has two nephews and a niece. I would have had him join them in the trust with me: but he refused to do so. An attempt once had been made upon his life, by villains set at work by a wicked brother, father of those nephews, and that niece, of which they were innocent: they are worthy young people. I had the happiness to save his life: but had no merit in it; for my own safety was involved in his. I am afraid he has been too grateful.

But, my good brother, said Miss Grandison, were you not a little reserved on this occasion? You went and returned, and went and returned, to Canterbury, and never said one word to us of the call you had to go thither. For my part, I thought there was a lady in the case, I do assure you.

My reserve as you call it, Charlotte, was rather accidental, than designed, and yet I do now-and-then treat your agreeable curiosity as mariners are said to

do a whale; I throw out a tub to divert it. But this was too melancholy an occasion to be sported with. I was affected by it. Had the gentleman lived to come to town, you would all have been acquainted with him. I love to communicate pleasure, but not pain; when, especially, no good end can be answered by the communication. I go to different places, and return, and hardly think it worth troubling my sisters with every movement. Had I thought you had any curiosity about my little journeyings to Canterbury, you should have had it answered. And yet I know my sister Charlotte loves to puzzle, and find out secrets where none are intended.

She blushed; and so did I. Your servant, Sir, was all she said.

But, Charlotte, proceeded he, you thought it was a *lady* that I visited: you know not your brother. I never will keep a secret of that nature from *you*, my good lord, nor from *you*, my sisters, when I find myself either encouraged or inclined to make a second visit. It is for *your* sex, Charlotte, to be very chary of such secrets; and reason good, if you have any doubt, either of the man's worthiness, or of your own consequence with him.

He looked very earnestly at her, but smiled.

So, brother! I thank you, humorously rubbing one side of her face (though she needed not to do so, to make both cheeks glow) this is another box on the same ear. I have been uneasy, I can tell you, Sir, at a hint you threw out before you last went to Canterbury, as if I kept from you something that it behoved you to know. Now pray, Sir, will you be pleased to explain yourself?

And, since you put it so strongly to me, Charlotte, let me ask you, Have you not?

And let me ask you, Sir—Do you think I have?

Perhaps, Charlotte, your solicitude on this sub-

ject, now, and the alarm you took at the time, on a very slight hint, might warrant—

No *warrants*, brother!—Pray be so good as to speak all that lies on your mind.

Ah, Charlotte! and looked, though smilingly, with meaning.

I will not bear this *Ah, Charlotte!* and that meaning look.

And are you willing, my dear, to try this cause?

I demand my trial.

Charming innocence! thought I, at the time—Now shall I find some fault, I hope, in this almost perfect brother. I triumphed in my mind, for my Charlotte.

Who shall be your judge?

Yourself, Sir.

God grant you may be found guilty, cousin, said Mr. Grandison, for your plaguing of me.

Has that wretch, looking at Mr. Grandison, insinuated any-thing?—She stopt.

Are you afraid, my sister?

I would not give that creature any advantage over me.

Sir Ch. I think *I* would, if there were fair room—You have too often all the game in your own hands. You should allow Mr. Grandison his chance.

Miss Gr. Not to arise from such an observing by-stander, as my brother.

Sir Ch. Conscious, Charlotte!

Miss Gr. May be not—

Sir Ch. *May be*, is doubtful: May be *No*, implies May be *Yes*.

Lady L. You have made Charlotte uneasy: indeed, brother, you have. The poor girl has been harping upon this string, ever since you have been gone.

Sir Ch. I am sorry what I said pressed so hard—Do *you*, Lady L. if this delinquency comes to trial, offer yourself as an advocate for Charlotte?

Lady L. I know not any act of delinquency she has committed.

Sir Ch. The act of delinquency is this—Shall I, Charlotte, explain myself?

Miss Gr. Teazing man! How can you—

Mr. Grandison rubbed his hands, and rejoiced. Miss Grandison was nettled. She gave Mr. Grandison *such* a look!—I never saw such a contemptuous one—Pray, Sir, do *you* withdraw, if you please.

Mr. Gr. Not I, by the mass! Are you afraid of a trial in open court? O-ho, cousin Charlotte!—

Miss Gr. Have I not a *cruel* brother, Miss Byron?

Lord L. Our sister Charlotte really suffers, Sir Charles.

Sir Ch. I am sorry for it. The *innocent* should not suffer. We will drop the cause.

Lady L. Worse and worse, brother.

Sir Ch. How so, Lady L.? Is not Charlotte innocent?

Dr. Bartlett. If an advocate be required, and you, Sir Charles, are judge, and not a pleader in this cause, I offer myself to Miss Grandison.

Sir Ch. A very powerful one she will then have. You think her cause a just one, doctor, by your offer. Will you, Charlotte, give Dr. Bartlett a brief? Or *have* you given him one?

Dr. Bart. I have no doubt of the justice of the cause.

Sir Ch. Nor of the justice of the *accuser*, I hope. I cannot be a *judge* in it.

Lady L. Nay, then!—Poor Charlotte!

Miss Gr. I wish, cousin Grandison, you would withdraw.

Mr. Gr. I wish, cousin Charlotte, you would *not* wish it.

Miss Gr. But are you serious, brother?

Sir Ch. Let us call another cause, sister, if you

please. Pray, my lord, what visiters have you had since I had the honour to attend you?

Miss Gr. Nay, brother—Don't think—

Sir Ch. BE QUIET, Charlotte.

Lady L. Your own words, sister!—But we had a visit from Lady Anne S. yesterday.

[I was glad to hear Lady L. say this. But nothing came of it.]

Sir Ch. You have seen Lady Anne more than once, my Emily: How do you like Lady Anne?

Miss Emily. Very well, Sir. She is a very agreeable lady. Don't you think so, Sir?

Sir Ch. I do. But, Charlotte (and looked tenderly upon her) I must not have you uneasy.

She sat vexed—her complexion raised; and playing with a lump of sugar: and sometimes twirling round and round a tea-cup; for the tea-things, through earnestness of talking, were not taken away, though the servants were withdrawn.

Mr. Gr. Well, I will leave you together, I think. Poor cousin Charlotte!—[Rising, he tapped her shoulder] Poor cousin Charlotte! Ha, ha, ha, hah!

Miss Gr. Impertinence! with a look, the fellow to that she gave him before.

Miss Emily. I will withdraw, if you please, madam; rising, and courtesying.

Miss Grandison nodded her assent. And Emily withdrew likewise.

Dr. Bartlett offered to do so. Miss Grandison seemed not to disapprove of his motion: but Sir Charles said, The doctor is retained on your part, Charlotte: he must hear the charge. Shall Miss Byron be judge?

I begged to be excused. The matter began to look like earnest.

Miss Gr. (whispering me) I wish, Harriet, I had opened my whole heart to you. Your nasty scribbling! Eternally at your pen; or I had.

Then I began to be afraid for her. Dear Miss Grandison! re-whispered I, it was not for me to obtrude—Dear Miss Grandison, my pen should never have interfered, if—

Miss Gr. (still whispering) One should be courted out of some sort of secrets. One is not very forward to begin some sort of discourses—Yet the subjects most in our hearts, perhaps. But don't despise me. You see what an accuser I have: and so generous a one too, that one must half condemn one's self at setting out.

Harriet. (whispering). Fear nothing, my Charlotte. You are in a brother's hands.

Miss Gr. Well, Sir Charles; and now, if you please, for the charge. But you say, you cannot be judge and accuser: Who shall be judge?

Sir Ch. Your own heart, Charlotte. I desire all present to be your advocates, if their judgment be with you: and if it be *not*, that they will pity you in silence.

He looked smilingly serious. Good Heaven! thought I.

Miss Gr. Pity me!—Nay, then—But, pray, Sir, your charge?

Sir Ch. The matter is too serious to be spoken of in metaphor.

Miss Gr. Good God!—Hem!—and twice more she hemmed—Pray, Sir, begin. Begin while I have breath.

Lord and Lady L. and Dr. Bartlett, and I, looked very grave; and Miss Grandison looked, in general, *fretfully humble*, if I may so express myself: and every-thing being removed, but the table, she played with her diamond ring; sometimes pulling it off, and putting it on; sometimes putting the tip of her finger in it, as it lay upon the table, and turning it round and round, swifter or slower, and stopping through downcast vexation, or earnest attention, as she found

herself more or less affected—What a sweet confusion!

Sir Ch. You know, my dear Charlotte, that I, very early after my arrival, enquired after the state of your heart. You told me it was absolutely free.

Miss Gr. Well, Sir.

Sir Ch. Not satisfied with your own acknowledgment; as I know that young ladies are too apt to make secrets of a passion that is not in itself illaudable [I know not why, when *proper* persons make enquiries, and for motives not ungenerous]; I asked your elder sister, who scrupled not to own hers, whether there were any one man, whom you preferred to another?—She assured me, that she knew not of any one.

Lady L. My sister knows I said truth.

Miss Gr. Well, well, Lady L. nobody doubts your veracity.

Sir Ch. Dear Charlotte, keep your temper.

Miss Gr. Pray, Sir, proceed—And the ring turned round very fast.

Sir Ch. On several occasions I put the same question, and had the same assurances. My reason for *repeating* my question, was owing to an early intelligence—Of which more by-and-by.

Miss Gr. Sir!

Sir Ch. And that I might either provide the money that was due to her as my sister, or take time to pay it, according to the circumstances of her engagement; and take from her all apprehensions of controul, in a case that might affect the happiness of her life—These, and brotherly love, were the motives of my enquiry.

Miss Gr. Your generosity, Sir, was without example.

Sir Ch. Not so, I hope. My sisters had an *equitable,* if not a *legal,* right to what has been done. I found, on looking into my affairs, that, by a moderate calculation of the family-circumstances, no

man should think of addressing a daughter of Sir Thomas Grandison, without supposing himself intitled, either by his merits or fortune, to expect 10,000l. with her—And this, even allowing to the son the customary preferences given to men as men; though given for the sake of pride, perhaps, rather than natural justice. For does not tyrant custom make a daughter change *her* name in marriage, and give to a son, for the sake of *name* only, the estate of the common ancestor of both?

This generous hint affected me. It was nearly my own case, you know. I might otherwise have been a rich heiress, and might have had as strong pretensions to be distinguished by the Grandisons, for my fortune, as any Lady S. in the kingdom. But worthless as those are, to whom, for the sake of the name, my father's estate is passed, I never grudged it to them till I came acquainted with these Grandisons.

Lord L. But who, Sir Charles, but you—

Sir Ch. Pray, my lord, let not your generosity mislead you to think that a favour, which is but a due. We shall not be judged by comparison. The laws of truth and justice are always the same. What others would not have done in the like situation, that let them look to: but what is the *mortal* man, who would make an unjust advantage of *mortality*?

Miss Grandison pulled out her handkerchief, put it to her eyes, and then in her lap; and putting half on, and half off, by turns, her ring, looked now-and-then at me, as if she wished me to pity her.

Indeed, Lucy, I did pity her: every one did; and so did her judge, I dare say, in his heart. But justice, my Lucy, is a severe thing. Who can bear a trial, if the integrity and greatness of this man's heart is to be the rule, by which their actions are to be examined? Yet you shall hear how generous he was.

Sir Ch. Allow me, for Miss Byron's sake, who has been but lately *restored* to our family, to be a little more particular, than otherwise I need to be. I had not been long in England, before Sir Walter Watkyns desired my interest with my sister. I told him, That she was entirely her own mistress; and that I should not offer to lead her choice. Lord G. made his court to her likewise; and, applying to me, received the same answer.

I entered, however, into serious talk with my sister upon this subject. She asked me what I thought of each gentleman. I told her frankly.

Miss Gr. And pray, brother, be so good as to repeat what you said of them. Let Miss Byron be judge whether either of the portraits was very inviting.

Sir Ch. I told her, Miss Byron, that Sir Walter would, I presumed, be thought the handsomer man of the two. He was gay, lively, genteel; and had that courage in his air and manner, that ladies were seldom displeased with. I had not, however, discovered any great depth in him. My sister, I imagined, if she married him, would have the superiority in good sense: but I questioned whether Sir Walter would easily find that out; or allow it, if he did. He was a brisk man for an hour, and might have wit and sense too; but indeed I hardly ever saw him out of ladies' company; and he seemed to be of opinion, that flash rather than fire, was what would recommend him to them. Sometimes I have thought, I told her, that women of sense should punish such men with their contempt, and not reward them with their approbation, for thus indirectly affronting their understandings: but that I had known women of sense approve a man of that character; and each woman must determine for herself, what appeared most agreeable to her.

Miss Gr. (whispering) Well, Harriet—

Har. (whispering) Don't interrupt him.

Sir Ch. You remember, my dear Charlotte, that it was in this kind of way I spoke of Sir Walter Watkyns; and added, That he was independent; in possession of the family-estate, which I believed was a good one; and that he talked handsomely to me of settlements.

I do remember this, said Miss Grandison; and whispering me, I am afraid, said she, he knows too much; but the *person* he cannot know.—Well, Sir, and pray be pleased to repeat what you said of Lord G.

Sir Ch. Lord G. I told you, was a gay-dressing man, but of a graver cast than the other. The fashion, rather than his inclination, seemed to govern his outward appearance. He was a modest man, and I feared had too much doubt of himself to appear with that dignity in the eye of a lively woman, which should give him a first consequence with her.—

Miss Gr. Your servant, Sir.

Sir Ch. I believed he would make a good husband: so perhaps might Sir Walter: but the one would *bear*, the other perhaps must be *borne with*. Ladies, as well as men, I presumed, had some foibles, that they would not care to part with. As to fortune, I added, that Lord G. was dependent on his father's pleasure. He had, indeed, his father's intire approbation, I found, in his address: and I hoped that a sister of mine would not wish for any man's death, for the sake of either title or fortune. You have seen Lord G. Miss Byron?

Har. What, Sir Charles, was Miss Grandison's answer?

[I did not care to give any opinion, that might either *hurt* or *humour* my Charlotte.]

Sir Ch. Charlotte told me, in so many words, That

she did not approve of either. Each gentleman, said I, has besought me to be his advocate: a task that I have not undertaken. I only told them. That I would talk to my sister upon the subject: but I did not think a brother ought to expect an influence over a sister, when the gentlemen suspected their own. You will remember, said I to my sister, that women cannot choose where they will; and that the same man cannot be every-thing—She desired me to tell her, which of the two I would prefer?—First, said I, let me repeat the question I have more than once put to you: Have you any the least shadow of a preference in your heart, to any third person?—What was my sister's answer? She said, she had not. And yet, had I not had the private intelligence I hinted at, I should have been apt to imagine, that I had some reason to repeat the question, from the *warmth*, both of *manner* and *accent*, with which she declared, that she approved of neither. Women, I believe, do not often, with *earnestness*, reject a man who is not *quite* disagreeable, and to whose quality and fortune there can be no objection, if they are absolutely unprejudiced in another's favour.

We women looked upon one another. I have no *doubt*, thought I, but Sir Charles came *honestly* by his knowledge of us.

The dear Charlotte sat uneasy. He proceeded.

However, I now made no question but my sister's affections were absolutely disengaged. My dear Charlotte, said I, I would rather be excused telling you *which* gentleman's suit I should incline to favour, lest my opinion should not have your inclination with it; and your mind, by that means, should suffer any embarrassment. She desired to know it.

Miss Gr. You were very generous, Sir; I owned you were, in this point, as well as in all others.

Sir Ch. I then declared in favour of Lord G. as the

man who would be most likely to make her happy; who would think himself most obliged to her for her favour: and I took the liberty to hint, that though I admired her for her vivacity, and even, when her wit carried its keenest edge, loved to be awakened by it, and wished it never to lose that edge; yet I imagined, that it would *hurt* such a man as Sir Walter. Lord G. it would *enliven:* and I hoped, if she took pleasure in her innocent sallies, that she would think it *something* so to choose, as that she should not be under a necessity of repressing those sprightly powers, that *very seldom* were to be wished to be reined in.

Miss Gr. True, Sir. You said, *very seldom,* I remember.

Sir Ch. I never will flatter either a prince, or a lady; yet should be sorry to treat either of them rudely.—She then asked me after my *own* inclinations. I took this for a desire to avoid the subject we were upon; and would have *withdrawn;* but not in ill-humour. There was no reason for it. My sister was not obliged to follow me in a subject that was not agreeable to her: but I took care to let her know, that *her* question was not a disagreeable one to *me;* but would be more properly answered on some other occasion. She would have had me to stay,—For the sake of the former subject, do you ask me to stay, Charlotte?—No, said she.

Well then, my dear, take time to consider of it; and at some other opportunity we will resume it. Thus tender did I *intend* to be, with regard to my sister's inclinations.

Miss Grandison wiped her eyes—And said, but with an accent that had a little peevishness in it, You wanted not, Sir, all this preparation. Nobody has the shadow of belief, that *you* could be wrong.

Sir Ch. If this, Charlotte, be well said; if, in that accent, it be *generously* said; I have done—And from my heart acquit you, and as cordially condemn myself, if I have appeared in your eye to intend to raise my own character, at the expence of yours. Believe me, Charlotte, I had much rather, in a point of delicacy, that the brother should be found faulty than the sister: and let it pass, that I am so—And only tell me, in what way you would wish me to serve you?

Miss Gr. Pardon me, brother. You can add forgiveness to the other obligations under which I labour. I was petulant.

Sir Ch. I do; most cordially I do.

Miss Gr. (wiping her eyes) But won't you proceed, *Sir?*

Sir Ch. At another opportunity, *madam.*

Miss Gr. MADAM!—Nay, now you are indeed angry with me. Pray, proceed.

Sir Ch. I am not: but you shall allow me an hour's conversation with you in your dressing-room, when you please.

Miss Gr. No!—Pray, proceed. Every one here is dear to me. Every one present must hear either my acquittal or condemnation. Pray, Sir, proceed—Miss Byron, pray sit still—Pray (for we were all rising to go out) keep your seats. I believe I have been wrong. My brother said, you must pity me in silence, if you found me faulty. Perhaps I shall be obliged to you for your pity.—Pray, Sir, be pleased to acquaint me with what you know of my faults.

Sir Ch. My dear Charlotte, I have said enough to point your fault to your own heart. If you know it; *that,* I hope, is sufficient.—Do not imagine, my dear, that I want to controul you—But—He stopt.

Miss Gr. But *what*, Sir?—Pray, Sir—And she trembled with eagerness.

Sir Ch. But it was not right to—And yet, I wish that I were mistaken in this point, and my sister not wrong!

Miss Gr. Well, Sir, you have reason, I suppose, to think—There she stopt—

Sir Ch. That there is a man whom you can approve of—notwithstanding—

Miss Gr. All I have said to the contrary. Well, Sir, if there be, it is a great fault to have denied it.

Sir Ch. That is all I mean—It is no fault for you to prefer one man to another. It is no fault in you to give this preference to any man, without consulting your brother. I proposed that you should be entirely mistress of your own conduct and actions. It would have been ungenerous in me, to have supposed you accountable to me, who had done no more than my duty by you. Dear Charlotte, do not imagine me capable of laying such a load on your free will: but I should not have been made to pronounce to Lord G. and even to the earl his father (on their enquiries whether your affections were or were not engaged) in such a manner as gave them hopes of succeeding.

Miss Gr. Are your sure, Sir?

Sir Ch. O my sister, how hard fought (now must I say?) is this battle!—I can urge it no further. For *your* sake, I can urge it no further.

Miss Gr. Name your man, Sir!—

Sir Ch. Not *my* man, Charlotte—Captain Anderson is not *my* man.

He arose; and taking her motionless hand, pressed it with his lips: Be not too much disturbed, said he. I am distressed, my sister, for your distress—I think, more than I am for the error: and, saying this, bowing to her, he withdrew.

He saw and pitied her confusion. She was quite confounded. It was very good of him to withdraw, to give her time to recover herself. Lady L. gave her her salts. Miss Grandison hardly ever wanted salts before.

O what a poor creature am I, said she, even in my own eyes! Don't despise me, Harriet—Dr. Bartlett, can you excuse me for so *sturdy* a perseverance? Forgive me, my lord!—Lady L. be indulgent to a sister's fault. But my brother will always see me in this depreciating light! "A battle hard fought," indeed! How one error, persisted in, produces another!

When Sir Charles heard her voice, as talking, every one soothing, and pitying her, he returned. She would have risen, with a disposition seemingly, as if she would have humbled herself at his feet: but he took her folded hands in one of his, and with the other drew a chair close to her, and sat down: with what sweet majesty, and mingled compassion in his countenance! Miss Grandison's *consciousness* made it terrible *only* to her.—Forgive me, Sir! were her words.

Dear Charlotte, I do. We have all something to be forgiven for. We pity others then most cordially, when we want pity ourselves. Remember only, in the cases of other persons, to soften the severity of your virtue.

He had Mrs. Oldham in his thoughts, as we all afterwards concluded.

We know not, said he, to what *inconveniencies* a small departure from principle will lead: and now let us look forward. But first, Had you rather shew me into your dressing-room?

Miss Gr. I have no wish to conceal any-thing from the persons present. I will only withdraw for a few moments.

She went out. I followed her. And then, wanting somebody to divide her fault with, the dear Charlotte blamed my *nasty* scribbling again: but for *that*, said she, I should have told you all.

And what, my dear, would that have done? returned I—That would not have prevented—

No: but yet you might have given me your advice: I should have had the benefit of that; and my confessions would have been, then, perhaps, aforehand with his accusations.—But, forgive me, Harriet—

O my Charlotte, thought I to myself, could you but rein-in your charming spirit, a little, *very* little, you would not have had two forgivenesses to ask instead of one.

LETTER XXIX.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Miss Grandison desired me to return to the company. I did. She soon followed me; took her seat; and, with an air of mingled dignity and concern, delivered herself after this manner.

If it be not too late, after a perseverance in error so obstinate, to reinstate myself in my brother's good opinion, dearer to me than that of the whole world besides, my ingenuousness shall make atonement for that error.

Sir Ch. I would spare my sister the—

Miss Gr. I will not be spared, Sir—Pray hear me —I would not, in order to extenuate my own faults (I hope I have not many) seek to throw blame upon the absent; much less upon the *everlastingly* absent: and yet my brother's piety must not be offended, if

I am obliged to say something that may seem to cast a shade on a memory—Be not hurt, Sir—I will be favourable to that memory, and just to my own fault. You, Harriet, would no more excuse me, than my brother, if I failed in either.

I bowed, and blushed. Sir Charles looked at me with a benign aspect.

My father, proceeded she, thought fit to be, or to *seem* to be, displeased with something that passed between him and Lord L. on the application made by my lord to him for my sister.

Sir Ch. He was not willing, perhaps, that a treaty of marriage should be begun but at his own first motion, however unexceptionable the man, or the proposal.

Miss Gr. Every one knows that my father had great abilities; and they were adorned with a vivacity and spirit, that, wherever pointed, there was no resisting. He took his two daughters to task upon this occasion; and being desirous to discourage in them, at that time, any thoughts of marriage, he exerted, besides his authority, on this occasion (which I can truly say, had *due* weight with us both) that vein of humour and raillery for which he was noted; insomuch that his poor girls were confounded, and unable to hold up their heads. My sister, in particular, was made to be ashamed of a passion, that surely no young woman, the object so worthy, ought to be ashamed of. My father also thought fit (perhaps for wise reasons) to acquaint us, that he designed for us but small fortunes: and this depreciated me with myself. My sister had a stronger mind, and had better prospects. I could not but apprehend from what my *sister* suffered, what must be *my* sufferings in turn; and I thought I could be induced to take any step, however rash, where virtue was not to be wounded, rather than undergo what

she underwent from the raillery of a man so lively; and so humorous, and who stood in so venerable a degree of relation to me. While these impressions were strong in my mind, Captain Anderson, who was quartered near us, had an opportunity to fall into my company at an assembly. He is a sprightly man, and was well received by every-body; and particularly a favourite of three young ladies, who could hardly be civil to each other, on his account: and this, I own, when he made assiduous court to me, in preference to them, and to every other woman, gave him some consequence with me: and then, being the principal officer in that part of the country, he was caressed as if he were a general. A daughter of Sir Thomas Grandison was deemed a prize worthy of his ambition, by every-body, as well as by himself: while this poor daughter, dreading the difficulties that her sister had met with, and being led to think, by what her father declared to both sisters, that two or three thousand pounds would be the height of her fortune, had only to apprehend, that a captain either of horse or foot, who had been perhaps for years a frequenter of public places, both in town and country, in hopes of raising his fortune, would think himself but poorly paid for his pains (were she even to obtain her father's pardon) should she engage without waiting for his consent; as she was urged to do, by letters, which he found ways unsuspectedly to send her.—I hope, Sir, I hope, my lord, and you, my two sisters, that you will *now*, from what I have said, acquit me of insincerity, though you cannot of *past* indiscretion.

Nevertheless, my pride at times was piqued: sometimes I declared off; at other times was prevailed upon by arts which men are masters of, to go on again; till I found myself entangled, and at a loss to know how to go either backward or forward.

The gentleman was indeed of a genteel family: but the object of my sister's regard had so much to be said for *him;* stood so well with my brother; and even with my father; was so much the man of quality, in every respect; that a rash step in me, I could not but think, would be looked upon as the more disgraceful, on that account; and that if I married Captain Anderson, I must be rejected, scorned, for a while, if not for ever.

And what title, often thought I, when I permitted myself seriously to think, have I to give my father a *son,* my brother, my sister, my Lord L. (should he and my sister marry) a *brother,* whom they would not have chosen, nor will probably own?—Have not they a better *right* to reject him for *their* relation, than I have to choose him for *my* husband? And shall Charlotte Grandison, the daughter of the most prudent of mothers, take a step that shall make her be looked upon as the disgrace of her family? Shall *she* be obliged to follow a soldier's fortune into different quarters, and perhaps distant regions?

Such as these were, at times, my reasonings; and perhaps they would have had the less force with me, had I, in giving myself a *husband,* had none of these relations living, on whom to obtrude a new one, to their dislike, by my marriage.

Hence I could not bear to reveal the matter to my sister, who, in *her* choice, had so much advantage over me. I thought within these few weeks past, I could reveal it to my new-found sister; and it was one of my motives to come hither, at your invitation, Lord and Lady L. when you told me she was so obliging as to accompany you down: but she was *everlastingly* writing; and I was shy of *forcing* an opportunity, as none agreeably offered.

Sir Ch. I would not interrupt you, Charlotte—

But may I ask, if this whole affair was carried on by letter? Did you not sometimes see each other?

Miss Gr. We did. But our meetings were not frequent, because he was at one time quartered in Scotland; at another, was sent to Ireland; where he staid six or seven months; at others, in distant parts of the kingdom.

Sir Ch. In what part of the king's dominions is the captain now?

Miss Gr. Dear Sir, could not the person who acquainted you with the affair, inform you of that?

Sir Ch. (smiling) The person *could*, madam; and *did*. He is in London.

Miss Gr. I hope, my brother, after the freedom of my confession, and an ingenuousness that is not often found in such cases as *this*, will not be so unkind as to imagine, that I ought to have traps laid for me, as if I were not now at last frank and unreserved.

Sir Ch. Exceedingly just, Charlotte! exceedingly just!—I beg your pardon. I said, we had all something to be forgiven for. I am not however questioning you, with intent to *cast a stone;* but to *lend you a hand.*

Miss Gr. O that we had had liberty granted to us, having *such* a brother, to correspond with him!—Happy shall I be, if I can atone—

There she stopt.

Sir Ch. Proceed with your story, my dear Charlotte.—Greatly does the atonement overbalance the fault!

Miss Gr. (bowing to her brother) Captain Anderson *is* in town. I have seen him twice. I was to have seen him at the play, had I not come down to Colnebrook. Not a tittle of the truth will I hide from you. Now I have recovered the right path,

not one wry step will I ever again wilfully take. I have suffered enough by those I had taken, though I endeavoured to carry it off as well as I could (even sometimes by a spirit of bravery) when it lay heavy *here*—putting her hand to her heart.

Sir Charles rose from his seat; and taking one of his sister's hands between both his, Worthy sister! Amiable Charlotte! After this noble frankness, I must not permit you to accuse yourself. An error gracefully acknowledged, is a victory won. If you think Captain Anderson worthy of *your* heart, he shall have a place in *mine*; and I will use my interest with Lord and Lady L. to allow of his relation to *them*. Miss Byron and Dr. Bartlett will look upon him as their friend.

He sat down again; his countenance shining with brotherly love.

Miss Gr. O Sir, what shall I say? You add to my difficulties by your goodness. I have told you how I had entangled myself. Captain Anderson's address began with hopes of a great fortune, which he imagined a daughter of Sir Thomas Grandison could not fail, first or last, to have. That this was his principal motive, has been, on many occasions (on too many for his advantage) visible to me. *My* allowance of his address, as I have hinted, was owing to my apprehensions, that I should not be a fortune worthy of a more generous man. At that time, our life was a confined one; and I girlishly wished for liberty—MATRIMONY and LIBERTY—Girlish connexion! as I have since thought.

We could none of us help smiling at this lively sally: but she went on more seriously.

I thought at first, that I could break with him when I would: but he holds me to it; and the more, since he has heard of your goodness to me; and builds great hopes of future preferment on the alliance.

Sir Ch. But do you not love Captain Anderson, my sister?

Miss Gr. I believe I love him as well as he loves me. His principal view, as I have said, has come out, avowedly, to be to my fortune: If I regulate my esteem for him by his for me, I ought not, for the very reason that he likes me, to approve of him.

Sir Ch. I do not wonder that the captain is desirous to *hold you to it*, to use your words: but, my dear Charlotte, answer me, Have you had less liking to Captain Anderson since your fortune is ascertained, and absolutely in your own power, than you had before?

Miss Gr. Not on *that* account, if I know my heart: but he has been a much more earnest suiter since your goodness to me was generally known, than before. When public report had made me absolutely dependent on my brother; and diminished (beyond the truth, as it has proved) the circumstances of the family; and when my sister and I were unhappy between our fears and our hopes; I then heard but little from Captain Anderson; and that little was *so* prudent, and *so* cold—But I had found out the man before.

Lord and Lady L. with warmth of voice, called him unworthy man. I thought him so; and so, by his looks, did Dr. Bartlett.

Sir Ch. Poor man!—He seems to have been too prudent, to trust even to Providence. But what, my sister, *are now* your difficulties?

Miss Gr. They proceed from my folly. Captain Anderson appeared to me at first, a man of sense, as well as an agreeable man in his person and air. He had a lively and easy elocution. *He* spoke without doubt; and *I* had therefore the less doubt of his understanding. The man who knows how to say agreeable things to a woman, in an agreeable manner, has

her vanity on his side; since, to doubt his veracity, would be to question her own merit. When he came to *write*, my judgment was even still more engaged in his favour than before. But when he thought himself on a *safe footing* with me, he then lost his hand-writing, and his stile, and even his orthography. I blush to say it; and I then blushed to see it.

Sir Ch. Men will be men. It is natural for us, when we find out our imperfections, to endeavour to supply them, or to gloss them over to those, whose good opinion of us we wish to engage. I have known men who are not so *ready* as the captain seems to have been, to find out their own defects. Captain Anderson, perhaps, lost his letter-writer, by the shifting of quarters. But it is strange that a man of family, as the captain is, should be so very illiterate.

Miss Gr. His early wildnesses, as I afterwards heard, made him run from school, before he had acquired common school-learning. His friends bought him a pair of colours. That was all they would ever do for him: and his father marrying a second wife, by whom he had children, considered not him as one. This came out to be his story. But he displayed himself to me in very different lights. He pretended to have a pretty estate, which, though not large, was well-conditioned, and capable of improvement; besides very considerable expectations. A mind that would not impose on another, must least bear to be imposed upon itself: but I could not help *despising* him, when I found myself so grossly imposed upon by the letters he had procured to be written for him; and that he was not either the man of sense, or learning, that he would have had me think him.

Sir Ch. But what was the *safe footing*, my sister, that he thought he was upon with you?

Miss Gr. O Sir! while all these good appearances

held in his favour, he had teazed me into a promise. And when he had gained that point, *then* it was, or *soon after*, that he wrote to me with his own hand. And yet, though he convinced me by doing so, that he had *before* employed another, it was a point agreed upon, that our intercourse was to be an absolute secret; and I trembled to find myself exposed to his scribe, a man I knew not; and who must certainly despise the lover whom he helped to all his agreeable flourishes; and, in despising *him*, must probably despise *me*. Yet I *will* say, that my letters were such as I can submit to the severest eye. It was indeed giving him encouragement enough, that I answered him by pen and ink; and he presumed enough upon it, or he had never dared to teaze me for a promise, as he did for months before I made him one.

Sir Ch. Women should never be drawn in to fetter themselves by promises. On the contrary, they ought always to despise, and directly to break with, the man who offers to exact a promise from them. To what end is a promise of this kind endeavoured to be obtained, if the urger suspects not the fitness of his addresses in the eyes of those who have a right to be consulted; and if he did not doubt either his own merit, or the lady's honour, and feared her returning discretion?—Therefore wanted to put it out of her own power to be dutiful; or (if she had begun to swerve, by listening to a clandestine address) to recover herself? Your father, my dear (but you might not know that) could have absolved you from this promise*. You have not now, however, any-body to controul you: you are absolutely your own mistress: and I see not but a promise—But pray, of what nature was this promise?

Miss Gr. O my folly!—I declared, that I never would marry any other man without his consent,

* Numb. xxx. 3, 4, 5.

while he was single. By this means (to my confusion) I own, that I made him my father, my guardian, my brother; at least, I made the influences over me, of such of them as had been living, of no avail, in the most material article of my life; teazed, as I told you, into it; and against my judgment.

Soon after, he let me know, as I said, in his own hand-writing, what an illiterate, what a mere superficial man I had entered into treaty with. And ever since I have been endeavouring by pen, as well as in person, to get him to absolve me from my rash promise: and this was my view and endeavour before I had a title to the independence, in which, Sir, you was so good as to establish me.

I once thought, proceeded she, that he would easily have complied, and have looked out elsewhere for a wife; for I sought not to *fetter* him, as you justly call it: he was not of so much consequence with me; and this renders me, perhaps, the less excuseable: but you held me not long enough in suspense, as to the great things you intended to do for me, to enable me to obtain that release from Captain Anderson, which I was meditating to procure, before he knew what those were.

All this time I kept my own secret. I had not confidence enough in the steps I had so rashly taken (indeed had not *humility* enough) to make any living creature acquainted with my situation: and this was the reason, I suppose, that I never was guessed at, or found out. The proverb says, *Two can keep a secret when one is away*: but my Harriet knows [I bowed] that I very early, in my knowledge of her, dropt hints of an *entanglement*, as I ludicrously called it; for I could not, with justice, say *love*.

Sir Ch. Charming frankness! How do your virtues shine through your very mistakes!—But there are many women who have suffered themselves to

be worse entangled, even beyond recovery, when they have not had to plead the apprehensions which you had at entering into this affair.

Miss Gr. You are Sir *Charles Grandison*, Sir: I need not say more. We often dread, in rash engagements, to make those communications, which only can be a means to extricate us from the difficulties into which we have plunged ourselves. Had I, for the last six or seven years of my life, known my brother as I now know him; had I been indulged in a correspondence with him in his absence; not a step would I have taken, but with his approbation.

Sir Ch. Perhaps I was too implicit on this occasion: but I always thought it more safe, in a disputable case, to check, than to give way to, an inclination. My father knew the world. He was not an ill-natured man. He loved his daughters. I had not the vanity to imagine, that my sisters, the *youngest* near as old as myself, would want my advice, in material articles: and to break through a father's commands, for the sake merely of gratifying *myself*—I could *not* do it: and as a considerate person, when he has lost a dear friend, and more particularly a parent, is apt to recollect with pleasure those instances in which he has given joy to the departed, and with pain the contrary; methinks I am the more satisfied with myself, for having obeyed a command, that however, at the time, I knew not how to account for.

Miss Gr. You are happy, brother, in this recollection. I should be more unhappy than I am (on your principles) had I vexed my father in this affair. Thank God, he knew nothing of it. But now, Sir, I have told you the whole truth. I have not aggravated the failings of Captain Anderson; nor wish to do so; for the man that once I had but the shadow of a thought to make one day my nearest relation, is intitled, I think, to my good *wishes*, though he prove not quite so worthy as I once believed him.

Permit me, however, to add, that Captain Anderson is passionate, overbearing: I have never of late met him, but with great reluctance: had I not come to Colnebrook, I should have *seen* him, as I confessed; but it was with the resolution that I had for a considerable time past avowed to him, Never to be his; and to be a single woman all my life, if he would not disengage me of my rash, my foolish promise. And now be pleased (looking round her to every one present) to advise me what to do.

Lord L. I think the man utterly unworthy of you, sister Charlotte. I think you are right to resolve never to have him.

Lady L. Without waiting for my brother's opinion, I must say, that he acts most ungenerously and unworthily, to hold you to an *unequal* promise: a promise, the like of which you offered not to bind *him* by. I cannot, Charlotte, think you bound by such a promise: and the poor trick of getting another person to write his letters for him, and exposing my sister to a stranger, and against stipulation—How I should hate him!—What say you, sister Harriet?

Harriet. I should be unworthy of this kind confidence, if, thus called upon, I did not say something, though it came out to be next to nothing—There seems not to have been any strong affection, any sympathy of soul, if I may so express myself, at *any* time, Miss Grandison, between you and Captain Anderson, I think?

Sir Ch. A very proper question.

Miss Gr. There was not, on *either* side, I believe. I have hinted at *my* motives, and at *his*. In every letter of his, he gave me cause to confirm what I have said of his self-interestedness: and now his principal plea to hold me to my promise, is, *his* interest. I would not to him, I never did, plead

mine; though his example would excuse me, if I did.

Lord L. Was the promise given in writing, sister?

Miss Gr. Indeed it was. She looked down.

Harriet. May I be pardoned, madam?—The substance of your promise was, That you would never marry any other man without his consent, while he remained unmarried—Did you promise, that, if ever you did marry at all, it should be to him?

Miss Gr. No. He wanted me to promise that; but I refused. And now, my Harriet, what is your advice?

Harriet. I beg to hear Dr. Bartlett's opinion, and yours, Sir (to Sir Charles) before I presume to give mine.

Sir Charles looked at the doctor. The doctor referred himself to him.

Sir Ch. Then, doctor, you must set me right, if I am wrong. You are a casuist.

As to what Lord L. has said, I think with his lordship, that Captain Anderson appears not, in any of his conduct, to be worthy of Miss Grandison: and in truth, I don't know many who are. If I am partial, excuse the *brother.*

She bowed. Every one was pleased, that Miss Grandison was enabled to hold up her head, as she did, on this compliment from her brother.

Sir Ch. I think also, if my sister esteems him not, she is in the right to resolve never to be his. But what shall we say, as to her promise, *Never to* be the wife of any other man without his consent, while he remains unmarried? It was made, I apprehend, while her father was living; who might, I believe, doctor, you will allow, have absolved her from it; but then, her very treating with him since to dispense with it, shews, that in her own conscience she thinks herself bound by it.

Every one being silent, he proceeded.

Lady L. is of opinion, that he acts ungenerously and unworthily, to endeavour to hold her to an unequal promise: but what man, except a *very* generous one indeed, having obtained an advantage over such a woman as Charlotte [she reddened] would not try to hold it? Must he not, by giving up this advantage, vote against himself? Women should be sure of the men in whom they place a confidence that concerns them highly. Can you think that the man who engages a woman to make a promise, does not intend to hold her to it? When he *teazes* her to make it, he as good as tells her he *does*, let what will happen to make her wish she had not.

Miss Gr. O my brother! The repetition of that word *teazes!*—Are you not raillying me?—Indeed I deserve it.

Sir Ch. Men gain all their advantages by *teazing*, by *promises*, by *importunities*—Be not concerned, my Charlotte, that I use your word.

Miss Gr. O my brother, what shall I do, if you railly me on my folly?

Sir Ch. I mean not to railly you. But I know something of my own sex; and must have been very negligent of my opportunities, if I know not something of the *world* [I thought, Lucy, he would here have used the word *other*, instead of the word *world*.] We have heard her reason for not binding the captain by a like promise: which was, that she did not value him enough to exact it: and was not that his misfortune?

She is apprehensive of blame on this head: but her situation will be considered: I *must not* repeat the circumstances. I was grieved to hear that my sisters had been in *such* circumstances? Wha pity, that those who believe they best know the sex, think themselves intitled to treat it with least respect!

[How we women looked upon one another!] I should hope in charity [in charity, Lucy!] and for the true value I bear it, as I think a good woman one of the greatest glories of the creation, that the fault is not *generally* in the sex.

As to the captain's artifice to obtain a footing by letters of another man's writing; that was enough indeed to make a woman, who herself writes finely, despise him when she knew it. But to what will not some persons stoop to gain a point, on which their hearts are fixed?—This is no *new* method. One signal instance I will mention. Madam Maintenon, it is reported, was employed in this way, by a favourite mistress of Louis XIV. And this was said to be the means of introducing her to the monarch's favour, on the ruins of her employer. Let me repeat, that women should be *sure* of their men, before they embark with them in the voyage of love. *Hate the man*, says Lady L. for *exposing her to the letter-writer!—Exposing!*—Let me say, that women, who would not be *exposed*, should not put themselves out of their own power. O Miss Byron! (turning, to my confusion, to me, who was too ready to apply the first part of the caution) be so good as to tell my Emily, that she must never love a man, of whose love she is not well assured: that she must never permit a man to know his consequence with her, till she is sure he is grateful, just, and generous: and that she must despise him as a mean and interested man, the first moment he seeks to engage her in a *promise*. Forgive me, Charlotte: you so generously blame yourself, that you will not scruple to have *your* experience pleaded for an example to a young creature, who may not be able, if entangled, to behave with your magnanimity.

Seasonably did he say this last part, so immediately after his reference to me; for I made Miss

Grandison's confusion a half-cover for my own; and I fear but a half-cover.

I find I must not allow myself to be long from you, my dear friends: at least, in this company. Miss Cantillon, Miss Barnevelt, and half a dozen more misses and masters, with whose characters and descriptions I first paraded; Where are you? Where can I find you? My heart, when I saw you at Lady Betty Williams's, was easy and unapprehensive; I could then throw my little squibs about me at pleasure; and not fear, by their return upon me, the singeing of my own clothes.

LETTER XXX.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

But now what remains to be done for our sister? asked Lady L. Charlotte looked round her, as seconding the question. Every one referred to Sir Charles.

In the first place, let me assure you, my dear Charlotte, resumed he, that if you have but the shadow of a preference for Captain Anderson; and if you believe, from what has passed between you, and from the suspense you have kept him in (which may have been a hindrance to his fortune or preferment) that you *ought* to be his, whether in justice, or by inclination; I will amicably meet him, in order to make and to receive proposals. If we do not *find* him grateful or generous, we will *make* him so, by our example; and I will begin to set it.

Every one was affected: Dr. Bartlett as much as any-body. Miss Grandison could hardly sit still: her chair was uneasy to her: while her brother

looked like one who was too much accustomed to acts of beneficence, to suppose he had said any thing extraordinary.

Miss Grandison, after some hesitation, replied, Indeed, Sir, Captain Anderson is *not* worthy of being called *your* brother. I will not enter into the particulars of his unworthiness; because I am determined not to have him. He knows I am: nor does my promise engage me to be his. Had he virtue, had he generosity—But indeed he has not either, in the degree that would make me respect him, as a woman should respect her husband.

Sir Ch. Well then, Charlotte, I would have you excuse yourself, if you have given him hopes of meeting him; let him know that you have acquainted me with all that has passed between you; and that you refer yourself wholly to me; but with a resolution (if such *be* your resolution) never to be his.

Miss Gr. I shall dread his violent temper—

Sir Ch. Dread nothing! Men who are violent to a woman when they have a point to carry by being so, are not always violent to men. But I shall treat him civilly. If the man ever hoped to call you his, he will be unhappy enough in losing such a prize. You may tell him, that I will give him a meeting wherever he pleases. Mean time, it may not be amiss, if you have no objection, to shew me some of the letters that have passed between you; of those particularly, in which you have declared your resolution not to be his; the farther backward, the better, if from the date of such you have *always* been of the same mind.

Miss Gr. You shall see the copies of *all* my letters; and *all* his, if you please. And you will gather from both, Sir, that it was owing to the unhappy situation I thought myself in, from the unkind treat-

ment my sister met with, and to the being forbidden to expect a fortune that would intitle me to look up to a man of figure in the world, that I was ever approachable by Captain Anderson.

Sir Ch. Unhappy! But let us look forward. I will meet Captain Anderson. If there are any letters, in which he has treated my sister unhandsomely, you must not let me see them. My motive for looking into *any* of them, is service to you, Charlotte, and not curiosity. But let me, nevertheless, see all that is necessary to the question, that I may not, when I meet him, hear any-thing from him, that I have not heard from you; and which may make for him, and against you. I do assure you, that I will allow in his favour, all that shall appear favourable to him, though against my sister. I may meet him *prejudiced*, but not *determined*: and I hope you see by my behaviour to you, Charlotte, that were you and he to have been fond lovers in your letters, you need not be afraid of my eye. I never am severe on lovers' foibles. Our passions may be made subservient to excellent purposes. Don't think you have a supercilious brother. A susceptibility of the passion called *love*, I condemn not as a fault; but the contrary. Your *brother*, ladies (looking upon all three) is no stoic.

And have you been in love, Sir Charles Grandison? thought I to myself.—Shall I, Lucy, be sorry, or shall I be glad, if he *has*?—But after all, is it not strange, that in all this time one knows so little of his history while he was abroad?—And yet, he said, that he was not angry at his sister for questioning him on the subject. Had *I* been his sister, questions of that sort would not have been to be *now* asked.

But here is a new task for her brother. I shall long to know how this affair will end.

The *trial* of Miss Grandison, as she called it, being thus happily over, and Miss Emily and Mr. Grandison desired to walk in, Sir Charles took notice, with some severity on our sex, on the general liking, which women have for military men. He did not know, he said, whether the army were not beholden to this approbation, and to the gay appearance officers were expected to make, rather than to a true martial spirit, for many a gallant man.

What say you, Emily? said he: Do not a cockade, and a scarlet coat, become a *fine gentleman*, and help to make him so, in your eyes?

Be pleased, Sir, to tell me how such a one *should* look in my eyes, and I will endeavour to make them conform to your lessons.

He bowed to the happy girl: For my part, said he, I cannot but say, that I dislike the life of a soldier in general; whose trade is in blood; who must be as much a slave to the will of *his* superiors in command, as he is almost *obliged* to be a tyrant to those under him.

But as to the sex, if it were not, that ladies, where love and their own happiness interfere, are the most incompetent judges of all others for themselves—Pardon me—

Your servant, Sir, said Lady L.—And we all bowed to him.

How can a woman, proceeded he, who really loves her husband, subject herself, of *choice*, to the necessary absences, to the continual apprehensions, which she must be under for his safety, when he is in the height of what is emphatically called his DUTY? He stopt. No answer being made, Perhaps, resumed he, it may be thus accounted for: women are the most delicate part of the creation. Conscious of the weakness of their sex, and that they stand in need of protection (for apprehensiveness,

the child of prudence, is as characteristic in them, as courage in a man) they naturally love brave men —And are not all military men supposed to be brave?

But how are they mistaken in their main end, supposing *this* to be it!

I honour a good, a generous, a brave, an humane soldier: but were such a one to be the bravest of men, how can his wife expect constant protection from the husband who is less *his own*, and consequently less *hers*, than almost any other man can be (a *sailor* excepted); and who must therefore, oftener than any other man, leave her exposed to those insults, from which she seems to think he can best defend her?

Lady L. (smiling) But may it not be said, Sir, that those women who make soldiers their choice, deserve, in some degree, a rank with heroes; when they can part with their husbands for the sake of their country's glory?

Sir Ch. Change your word *glory* for *safety*, Lady L. and your question will be strengthened. The word and thing called *glory*, what mischief has it not occasioned!—As to the question itself, were you *serious*, let every one, I answer, who can plead the *motive*, be intitled to the *praise* that is due to it.

Miss Gr. There is so much weight in what my brother has said, that I thank Heaven, I am not in danger of being the wife of a soldier.

We, who knew what she alluded to, smiled at it; and Mr. Grandison looked about him, as if he wanted to find more in the words, than they could import to him; and then was very earnest to know how his cousin had come off.

Sir Ch. Triumphantly, cousin. Charlotte's supposed fault has brought to light additional excellencies.

Mr. Gr. I am sorry for that with all my soul—There was no bearing her before—And now what will become of me?

Miss Gr. You have nothing new to fear, Mr. Grandison, I assure you. I have been detected in real faults. I have been generously treated; and repent of my fault. Let me have an instance of like ingenuousness in you; and I will say, there are hopes of us both.

Mr. Gr. Your servant, cousin. *Either* way I must have it. But were you to follow the example by which you own yourself amended, I might have the better chance, perhaps, of coming up to you in ingenuousness.

Lord L. Upon my word, sister Charlotte, Mr. Grandison has said a good thing.

Miss Gr. I think so too, my lord. I will put it down. And if you are wise, Sir (to him) ask me to sew up your lips till to-morrow dinner-time.

Mr. Grandison looked offended.

Sir Ch. Fie, Charlotte!

I am glad, thought I, my good Miss Grandison, that you have not lost much spirit by your trial!

* *

Miss Grandison has shewed me some of the letters that passed between Captain Anderson and her. How must she have despised him, had she been drawn in to give him her hand! And the more for the poor figure he would have made as a brother to *her* brother! How must she have blushed at every civility paid him in such a family! Yet from some passages in his letters, I dare say, he would have had the higher opinion of himself; first for having succeeded with her, and next for those very civilities.

And thus had Sir Thomas Grandison, with all his pride, like to have thrown his daughter, a woman of high character, fine understanding, and an exalted

mind, into the arms of a man, who had neither fortune, nor education, nor yet good sense, nor generosity of heart, to countenance his pretensions to such a lady, or her for marrying beneath herself.

This is a copy of what Miss Grandison has written to send to Captain Anderson.

SIR,

Had I had a generous man to deal with, I needed not to have exposed myself to the apprehended censures of a brother, whose virtues made a sister, less perfect than himself, afraid that he would think her unworthy of that tender relation to him, from the occasion. But he is the noblest of brothers. He pities me; and undertakes to talk with you, in the most friendly manner, at your own appointment, upon a subject that has long greatly distressed me; as *well* you know. I will not recriminate, as I might: but this assurance I must, for the hundredth time, repeat, that I never can, never will be to you, any other than

CHARLOTTE GRANDISON.

She is dissatisfied with what she has written, but I tell her, I think it will do very well.

LETTER XXXI.

MISS BYRON. IN CONTINUATION.

Thursday, March 16.

SIR Charles has already left us. He went to town this morning on the affairs of his executorship. He breakfasted with us first.

Dr. Bartlett, with whom already I have made

myself very intimate, and who, I find, knows his whole heart, tells me he is always fully employed. *That* we knew before—No wonder then, that he is not in love. He has not had leisure, I suppose, to attend to the calls of such an idle passion.

You will do me the justice to own, that in the round of employments I was engaged in at Selby-house, I never knew any-thing of the matter: but indeed there was no Sir Charles Grandison; first to engage my gratitude; and then, my heart. So it is; I must not, it seems, *deny* it. If I did, "a child in love-matters would detect me."

* *

O my Lucy! I have been hard set by these sisters. They have found me out; or rather, let me know, that they long ago found me out. I will tell you all as it passed.

I had been so busy with my pen, that, though accustomed to be first dressed, wherever I was, I was now the last. They entered my dressing-room arm in arm; and I have since recollected that they looked as if they had mischief in their hearts; Miss Grandison especially. She had said, she would play me a trick.

I was in some little hurry, to be so much behindhand, when I saw them dressed.

Miss Grandison would do me the honour of assisting me, and dismissed Jenny, who had but just come in to offer her service.

She called me charming creature twice, as she was obligingly busy about me; and the second time said, Well may my brother, Lady L. say what he did of this girl!

With too great eagerness, What, what, said I—I was going to add—*did he say?*—But catching myself up, in a tone of less surprise—designing to turn it off—WHAT *honour you do me, madam, in this your kind assistance!*

Miss Grandison looked archly at me; then turning to Lady L. This Harriet of ours, said she, is more than half a rogue.

Punish her then, Charlotte, said Lady L. You have, though with much ado, been brought to speak out yourself; and so have acquired a kind of right to punish those who affect disguises to their best friends.

Lord bless me, ladies! And down I sat—What, what—I was going to say, *do you mean?* But stopt, and I felt my face glow.

What, what! repeated Miss Grandison—My sweet girl can say nothing but *What, what!*—One of my fellows, Sir Walter Watkyns, is in her head, I suppose—Did you ever see *Wat*—Watkyns, Harriet?

My handkerchief was in my hand, as I was going to put it on. I was unable to throw it round my neck. O how the fool throbbed, and trembled!

Miss Gr. Confirmation, Lady L.! Confirmation!

Lady L. I think so, truly—But it wanted none to me.

Har. I am surprised! Pray, ladies, what can you mean by this sudden attack?

Miss Gr. And what, Harriet, can you mean by these *What, what's,* and this sudden emotion?—Give me your handkerchief!—What doings are here!

She snatched it out of my trembling hand, and put it round my neck—Why this *sudden* palpitation?—Ah! Harriet! Why won't you make confidents of your two sisters: do you think we have not found you out before this?

Har. Found me out! How found me out!—Dear Miss Grandison, you are the most alarming lady that ver lived!—

I stood up, trembling.

Miss Gr. Am I so? But to cut the matter short—[Sit down, Harriet. You can hardly stand] Is it such a disgraceful thing for a fine girl to be in love?

Har. Who I, I, in love!*

Miss Gr. (laughing) So, Lady L. you see that Harriet has found herself out to be a *fine* girl!—Disqualify now; can't you, my dear? Tell fibs. Be affected. Say you are *not* a fine girl, and-so-forth.

Har. Dear Miss Grandison—It was *your* turn yesterday. How can you forget—

Miss Gr. Spiteful too! My life to a farthing, you pay for *this*, Harriet!—But, child, I was not in love—Ah! Harriet! That gentleman in Northamptonshire—Did you think we should not find you out?

This heartened me a little.

Har. O madam, do you think to come at any-thing by such methods as this? I ought to have been aware of Miss Grandison's alarming ways.

Miss Gr. You pay for *this*, also, Harriet. Did you not say, that I should take the reins, Lady L.? I will have no mercy on our younger sister for this abominable affectation and reserve.

Har. And so, ladies, I suppose you think, that Mr. Orme——

Lady L. Take the reins, Charlotte (making a motion with a sweet pretty air, with her handkerchief, as if she tossed her something); I myself, Harriet, am against you now. I wanted a trial of that frankness of heart, for which I have heard you so much commended: and, surely, you might have shewed it, if to any persons living, to your two sisters.

Miss Gr. No more, no more. Lady L. Have you not left her to me? I will punish her. *You* will have too much lenity.——And now tell me, Harriet—

Don't you love Mr. Orme better than any man you ever yet saw?

Har. Indeed I do not.

Miss Gr. Whom do you love better, Harriet?

Har. Pray Miss Grandison!

MisGr. And *pray*, Miss Byron!

Har. Resume the reins, Lady L.—Pray do!—Miss Grandison has no mercy! Yet met with a great deal yester—

Miss Gr. Yesterday?—Very well!—But then I was ingenuous—

Har. And am not I?—Pray, Lady L.

Lady L. I think not.

And she seemed a little too cruelly to enjoy the flutter I was in.

Miss Gr. And you say, that there is no one gentleman in Northamptonshire—

Har. What is the meaning of this, ladies? But I do assure you, there is not—

Miss Gr. See, Lady L. there are some questions that the girl can answer readily enough.

I believe I looked serious. I was silent. Indeed my very soul was vexed.

Miss Gr. Ay, Harriet, be sullen: don't answer any questions at all. That's your only way, now—And then we go no further, you know. But tell me—Don't you repent, that you have given a denial to Lady D.?

Har. I won't be sullen, ladies. Yet I am not pleased to be thus—

Miss Gr. Then own yourself a woman, Harriet; and that, in some certain instances, you have both affectation, and reserve. There are some cases, my dear, in which it is impossible but a woman must be guilty of affectation.

Har. Well then, suppose I am. I never pretended to be clear of the foibles which you impute

to the sex. I am a weak, a very weak creature: you see I am—

And I put my hand in my pocket for my handkerchief.

Miss Gr. Ay, weep, love. My sister has heard me say that I never in my life saw a girl so lovely in tears.

Har. What have I done to deserve—

Miss Gr. Such a compliment!—Hay?—But you shan't weep neither.—Why, why, is this subject so affecting, Harriet?

Har. You surprise me!—Parted with you but an hour or two ago—and nothing of these reproaches.—And now, all at once, *both* ladies—

Miss Gr. Reproaches, Harriet!—

Har. I believe so. I don't know what else to call them.

Miss Gr. What! Is it a reproach to be taxed with love—

Har. But the manner, madam—

Miss Gr. The *manner* you are taxed with it, is the thing then—Well, putting on a grave look, and assuming a softer accent—You *are* in love, however: but with whom? is the question—Are we, your sisters, intitled to know with whom?

Surely, ladies, thought I, you have something to say, that will make me amends for all this intolerable teazing: and yet my proud heart, whatever it were to be, swelled a little, that *they* should think *that* would be such high amends, which, however, I by myself, communing only with my own heart, would have thought so.

Lady L. (coming to me, and taking my hand) Let me tell you, our dearest Harriet, that you are the most insensible girl in the world, if you are *not* in love—And *now* what say you?

Har. Perhaps I do know, ladies, enough of the passion, to wish to be less alarmingly treated.

They then sitting down, one on either side of me; each took a hand of the trembling fool.

I think I *will* resume the reins, Charlotte, said the countess. We are both cruel. But tell us, my lovely sister, in one word tell your Caroline, tell your Charlotte, if you have any confidence in our love (and indeed we love you, or we would not have teazed you as we have done) if there be not one man in the world, whom you love above all men in it?

I was silent. I looked down. I had, in the same moment, an ague, in its cold, and in its hot fit. They vouchsafed, each, to press with her lips the passive hand each held.

Be not afraid to speak out, my dear, said Miss Grandison. Assure yourself of my love; my true *sisterly* love. I once intended to lead the way to the opening of your heart by the discovery of my own, before my brother, as I hoped, could have found me out—But nothing can be hid—

Madam! ladies! said I, and stood up in a hurry, and, in as great a discomposure, sat down again—Your brother has not, could not—I would die before——

Miss Gr. Amiable delicacy!—He has not—But say you, Harriet, he *could* not?—If you would not be teazed, don't aim at reserves—But think you, that we could not see, on a hundred occasions, your heart at your eyes?—That we could not affix a proper meaning to those sudden throbs just here, patting my neck; those half-suppressed, but always involuntary sighs—[I sighed]—Ay, just such as that—[I was confounded]—But to be serious, we do assure you, Harriet, that had we not thought ourselves under some little obligation to Lady Anne S. we should have talked to you before on this subject. The friends of that lady have been very solicitous with us—And Lady Anne is not averse—

Har. Dear ladies! withdrawing the hand that Miss Grandison held, and taking out my handkerchief; you say, you love me!—Won't you despise whom you love?—I do own—

There I stopt; and dried my eyes.

Lady L. What does my Harriet own?—

Har. O madam, had I a greater opinion of my own merit, than I have reason to have (and I never had so little a one, as since I have known you two) I could open to you, without reserve, my whole heart—But one request I have to make to you—You must grant it.

They both in a breath asked what that was.

Har. It is, that you will permit your chariot to carry me to town this very afternoon. And long shall not that *town* hold your Harriet—Indeed, indeed, ladies, I cannot now ever look your brother in the face—And you will also both despise me!—I know you will!

Sweet, and as *seasonable* as sweet (for I was very much affected) were the assurances they gave me of their continued love.

Miss Gr. We have talked with our brother this morning—

Har. About me! I hope he has not a notion, that—There I stopt.

Lady L. You were mentioned: but we intend not to alarm you further. We will tell you what passed. Lady Anne was our subject.

I was all attention.

Miss Gr. We asked him if he had any thoughts of marriage? The question came in properly enough, from the subject that preceded it. He was silent: but sighed, and looked grave [Why did Sir Charles Grandison sigh, Lucy?]. We repeated the question. You told us, brother, said I, that you do not intend to resume the treaty begun by my father for Lady

Frances N. What think you of Lady Anne S.? We need not mention to you how considerable her fortune is; what an enlargement it would give to your power of doing good; nor what her disposition and qualities are: her person is far from being disagreeable: and she has a great esteem for you.

I think Lady Anne a very agreeable woman, replied he: but if she honours me with a preferable esteem, she gives me regret; because it is not in my power to return it.

Not in your *power*, brother?

It is not in my power to return it.

O Lucy! how my heart fluttered! The ague-fit came on again; and I was hot and cold, as before, almost in the same moment.

They told me, they would not teaze me further. But there are subjects that cannot be touched upon without raising emotion in the bosom of a person who hopes, and is uncertain. O the cruelty of suspense! How every new instance of it tears in pieces my before almost bursting heart!

Miss Gr. My brother went on—You have often hinted to me at distance this subject. I will not, as I might, answer your question, now so *directly* put, by saying, that it is my wish to see you, Charlotte, happily married, before I engage myself. But, perhaps, I shall be better enabled some time hence, than I am at present, to return such an answer as you may expect from a brother.

Now, my Harriet, we are afraid, by the words, *Not in his power*; and by the hint, that he cannot at present answer our questions as he may be enabled to do some time hence; we are afraid, that some foreign lady—

They had raised my hopes; and now, exciting my fears by so well-grounded an apprehension, they were obliged for their pains to hold Lady L.'s salts to my

nose. I could not help exposing myself; my heart having been weakened too by their teazings before. My head dropt on the shoulder of Miss Grandison. Tears relieved me.

I desired their pity. They assured me of their love; and called upon me, as I valued their friendship, to open my whole heart to them.

I paused. I hesitated. Words did not immediately offer themselves. But at last, I said, Could I have thought myself intitled to your excuse, ladies, your Harriet, honoured, as she was, from the first, with the appellation of *sister*, would have had no reserve to *her* sisters: but a just consciousness of my own unworthiness overcame a temper, that, I will say, is naturally frank and unreserved. Now, however——

There I stopt, and held down my head.

Lady L. Speak out, my dear—What *Now*—

Miss Gr. What *Now, however*—

Harriet. Thus called upon; thus encouraged—And I lifted up my head as boldly as I could (but it was not, I believe, very boldly) I will own, that the man, who by so signal an instance of his bravery and goodness engaged my gratitude, has possession of my whole heart.

And then, almost unknowing what I did, I threw one of my arms, as I sat between them, round Lady L.'s neck, the other round Miss Grandison's; my glowing face seeking to hide itself in Lady L.'s bosom.

They both embraced me, and assured me of their united interest. They said, They knew I had also Dr. Bartlett's high regard: but that they had in vain sought to procure new lights from him; he constantly, in every-thing that related to their brother, referring himself to him: and they assured me, that I had likewise the best wishes and interest of Lord L. to the fullest extent.

This, Lucy, is some—consolation—must I say? —some ease to my pride, as to what the *family* think of me: but yet, how is that pride mortified, to be thus obliged to rejoice at this strengthening of hope to obtain an interest in the heart of a man, of whose engagements none of us know any-thing! But if, at last, it shall prove, that that worthiest of hearts is disengaged; and if I *can* obtain an interest in it; be pride out of the question! The man, as my aunt wrote, is Sir Charles Grandison.

I was very earnest to know, since my eyes had been such tell-tales, if their brother had any suspicion of my regard for him.

They could not, they said, either from his words or behaviour, gather that he had. He had not been so much with me, as they had been. Nor would they wish that he *should* suspect me. The best of men, they said, loved to have difficulties to conquer. Their brother, generous as he was, was a *man*.

Yet, Lucy, I thought at the time of what he said at Sir Hargrave Pollexfen's, as recited by the short-hand-writer—That he would not marry the greatest princess on earth, if he were not assured, that she loved him above all the men in it.

I fancy, my dear, that we women, when we love, and are doubtful, suffer a great deal in the apprehension, at one time, of disgusting the object of our passion by too forward a love; and, at another, of disobliging him by too great a reserve. Don't you think so?

The ladies said, They were extremely solicitous to see their brother married. They wished it were to me, rather than to any other woman; and kindly added, That I had their hearts, even at the time when Lady Anne, by a kind of previous engagement, had their voices.

And then they told me what their brother said of

me, with the hint of which they began this alarming conversation.

When my brother had let us know, said Miss Grandison, that it was not in his power to return a preferable esteem for a like esteem, if Lady Anne honoured him with it; I said—If Lady Anne had as many advantages to boast of, as Miss Byron has, could you then, brother, like Lady Anne?

Miss Byron, replied he, is a charming woman.

Lady L. (slily enough, continued Miss Grandison) said, Miss Byron is one of the prettiest women I ever beheld. I never saw in any face, youth, and dignity, and sweetness of aspect, so happily blended

On this occasion, Lucy, my vanity may, I hope, revive, so long as I *repeat* only, and repeat justly.

"Forgive me, Lady L. replied my brother—But as Alexander would be drawn only by Apelles; so would I say to all those who leave *mind* out of the description of Miss Byron, that *they* are not to describe her. This young lady" [you *may* look proud, Harriet!] "has *united* in her face, *feature*, *complexion*, *grace*, and *expression*, which very few women, even of those who are most celebrated for beauty, have *singly* in equal degree: but, what is infinitely more valuable, she has a heart that is equally pure and open. She has a fine mind: and it is legible in her face. Have you not observed, Charlotte, added he, what intelligence her very silence promises? And yet, when she speaks, she never disappoints the most raised expectation."

I was speechless, Lucy.

Well, brother, continued Miss Grandison—If there is not every-thing you say in Miss Byron's face and mind, there seems to me little less than the warmth of love in the description—You are another Apelles, Sir, if his colours were the most glowing of those of all painters.

My eyes had the assurance to ask Miss Grandison, what answer he returned to this? She saw they had.

Ah! Harriet! smiling—That's a meaning look, with all its bashfulness. This was my brother's answer—"Every-body must love Miss Byron—You know, Charlotte, that I presented her to *you*, and you to *her*, as a third sister: and what man better loves his sisters, than your brother?"

We both looked down, Harriet; but not quite so silly, and so disappointed, as you *now* look—

Dear Miss Grandison!—

Well, then another time don't let your eyes ask questions, instead of your lips.

Third sister! my Lucy! Indeed I believe I looked silly enough. To say the truth, I *was* disappointed.

Har. And this was all that passed? You hear by my question, ladies, that my lips *will* keep my eyes in countenance.

Miss Gr. It was; for he retired as soon as he had said this.

Har. How retired, madam?—Any *discompo*—You laugh at my folly; at my presumption perhaps.—

They both smiled. No, I can't say that there seemed to be, either in his words or manner, any *distinguishing* emotion; any great *discompo*—He was about to retire before.

Well, ladies, I will only say, that the best thing I can do, is, to borrow a chariot-and-six, and drive away to Northamptonshire.

But why so, Harriet?

Because it is impossible but I must suffer in your brother's opinion, every time he sees me, and that whether I am silent or speaking.

They made me fine compliments: but they would *indeed* have been fine ones, could they have made them from their brother.

Well, but Lucy, do you think, that had Sir Charles

Grandison meant any-thing, he would have expressed himself to his sisters in such high terms, before he had said *one* very distinguishing thing to me? Let me judge by myself—Men and women, I believe, are so much alike, that, put custom, tyrant-custom, out of the question, the meaning of the one may be generally guessed at by that of the other, in cases where the heart is concerned. What civil, what polite things, could I allow myself to say to and of Mr. Orme, and Mr. Fowler! How could I praise the honesty and goodness of their hearts, and declare my pity for them! Because I meant nothing more by it all, than a warmer kind of civility; that I was not *afraid to let go*, as their merits *pulled*—And now, methinks, I can better guess, than I could *till* now, at what Mr. Greville meant, when he wished me to declare, that I *hated* him—Sly wretch!—since the woman who uses a man insolently in courtship, certainly makes that man of more importance to her, than she would wish him to think himself.—

But why am I studious to torment myself? What *will* be, *must*. "Who knows what Providence has designed for Sir Charles Grandison?"—May *he* be happy!—But indeed, my Lucy, your Harriet is much otherwise at this time.

LETTER XXXII.

MISS BYRON TO MISS SELBY.

I WILL not let you lose the substance of a very agreeable conversation, which we had on Tuesday night after supper. You may be sure, Lucy, I thought it the more agreeable, as Sir Charles was drawn in to bear a considerable part in it. It would

be impossible to give you more than passages, because the subjects were various, and the transitions so quick, by one person asking this question, another that, that I could not, were I to try, connect them as I endeavour generally to do.

Of one subject. Lucy, I particularly *owe* you some account.

Miss Grandison, in her lively way (and lively she was, notwithstanding her trial so lately over) led me into talking of the detested masquerade. She put me upon recollecting the giddy scene, which those dreadfully interesting ones that followed it, had made me wish to blot out of my memory.

I spared you at the time, Harriet, said she. I asked you no questions about the masquerade, when you flew to us first, poor frighted bird! with all your gay plumage about you.

I coloured a deep crimson, I believe. What were Sir Charles's first thoughts of me, Lucy, in that fantastic, that hated dress? The simile of the bird too was *his*, you know; and Charlotte looked very archly.

My dear Miss Grandison, spare me still. Let me forget, that ever I presumptuously ventured into such a scene of folly.

Do not call it by harsh names, Miss Byron, said Sir Charles. We are too much obliged to it.

Can I, Sir Charles, call it by *too* harsh a name, when I think, how fatal, in numberless ways, the event might have proved! But I do not speak only with reference to that. Don't think, my dear Miss Grandison, that my dislike to myself, and to this foolish diversion, springs altogether from what befel *me*. I had on the spot the same contempts, the same disdain of myself, the same dislike of all those who seemed capable of joy on the light, the foolish occasion.

My good Charlotte, said Sir Charles, smiling, is

less timorous than her younger sister. *She* might be persuaded, I fancy, to venture—

Under your conduct, Sir Charles. You know, Lady L. and I, who have not yet had an opportunity of this sort, were trying to engage you against the next subscription-ball.

Indeed, said Lady L. our Harriet's distress has led me into reflections I never made before on this kind of diversion; and I fancy her account of it will perfectly satisfy *my* curiosity.

Sir Ch. Proceed, good Miss Byron. I am as curious as your sisters, to hear what you say of it. The scene was quite new to you. You probably expected entertainment from it. Forget for a while the accidental consequences, and tell us how you were at the time amused.

Amused, Sir Charles!—Indeed I had no opinion of the diversion, even before I went. I knew I should despise it. I knew I should often wish myself at home before the evening was over. And so indeed I did. I whispered my cousin Reeves more than once, O madam! this is sad, this is intolerable, stuff! This place is one great Bedlam! Good Heaven! Could there be in this one town so many creatures devoid of reason, as are here got together? I hope we are *all* here.

Yet you see, said Miss Grandison, however Lady L. is, or seems to be, instantaneously reformed, there were *two*, who would gladly have been there: the more, you may be sure, for its having been a diversion prohibited to us, at our first coming to town. Sir Charles lived long in the land of masquerades—O my dear! we used to please ourselves with hopes, that when he was permitted to come over to England, we should see golden days under his auspices.

Sir Ch. (smiling) Will you accompany us to the next subscription-ball, Miss Byron?

I, Sir Charles, should be inexcusable, if I thought—

Miss Gr. (interrupting, and looking archly) Not under *our brother's* conduct, Harriet?

Indeed, my dear Miss Grandison, had the diversion not been *prohibited*, had you once seen the wild, the senseless confusion, you would think just as I do: and you would have one stronger reason against countenancing it by your presence; for who, at this rate, shall make the stand of virtue and decorum, if such ladies as Miss Grandison and Lady L. do not? —But I speak of the common masquerades, which I believe are more disorderly. I was disgusted at the freedoms taken with me, though but the common freedoms of the place, by persons who singled me from the throng, hurried me round the rooms, and engaged me in fifty idle conversations; and to whom, by the privilege of the place, I was obliged to be bold, pert, saucy, and to aim at repartee and smartness: the current wit of that witless place. They once got me into a country-dance. No prude could come, or if she came, could be a prude there.

Sir Ch. Were you not pleased, Miss Byron, with the first coup d'oeil of that gay apartment?

A momentary pleasure: but when I came to reflect, the bright light, striking on my tinsel dress, I thought myself the more conspicuous fool. Though kept in countenance, as I am, by scores of still more ridiculous figures, what, thought I, are other people's follies to me? Am I to make an appearance that shall want the countenance of the vainest, if not the silliest, part of the creation? What would my good grandfather have thought, could he have seen his Harriet, the girl (excuse me; they were my thoughts at the time) whose mind he took pains to form and enlarge, mingling in a habit so preposterously rich and gaudy, with a crowd of satyrs, harlequins, scaramouches, fauns, and dryads; nay, of witches and

devils: the graver habits striving which should most disgrace the characters they assumed, and every one endeavouring to be thought the direct contrary of what he or she appeared to be?

Miss Gr. Well then, the devils, at least, must have been charming creatures!

Lady L. But, Sir Charles, might not a masquerade, if decorum were observed, and every one would support with wit and spirit the assumed character—

Mr. Gr. Devils and all, Lady L.

Lady L. It is contrary to decorum for such shocking characters to be assumed at all: but might it not, Sir Charles, so regulated, be a rational, and an almost instructive, entertainment?

Sir Ch. You would scarcely be able, my dear sister, to collect eight or nine hundred people, all wits, and all observant of decorum. And if you could, does not the example reach down to those who are capable of taking only the bad and dangerous part of a diversion: which you see by every common newspaper is become dreadfully general?

Mr. G. Well, Sir Charles, and why should not the poor devils in *low life* divert themselves as well as their betters? For my part, I rejoice when I see advertised an eighteen-penny masquerade, for all the pretty 'prentice souls, who will that evening be Arcadian shepherdesses, goddesses, and queens.

Miss Gr. What low profligate scenes couldst thou expatiate upon, good man! if thou wert in proper company! I warrant those goddesses have not wanted an adorer in our cousin Everard.

Mr. Gr. Dear Miss Charlotte, take care! I protest, you begin to talk with the spite of an old maid.

Miss Gr. There, brother! Do you hear the wretch? Will not you, knight-errant like, defend the cause of a whole class of distressed damsels, with our good Yorkshire aunt at the head of them?

Sir Ch. Those general prejudices and aspersions, Charlotte, are indeed unjust and cruel. Yet I am for having every body marry. Bachelors, cousin Everard, and maids, when long single, are looked upon as houses long empty, which nobody cares to take. As the house in time, by long disuse, will be thought by the vulgar haunted by evil spirits, so will the others, by the *many*, be thought possessed by no good ones.

The transition was some-how made from hence to the equitableness that ought to be in our judgments of one another. We must in these cases, said Sir Charles, throw merit in one scale, demerit in the other; and if the former weigh down the latter, we must in charity pronounce to the person's advantage. So it is humbly hoped we shall finally be judged ourselves: for who is faultless?

Yet, said he, for my own part, that I may not be wanting to prudence, I have sometimes, where the merit is not very striking, allowed persons, at first acquaintance, a short lease only in my good opinion; some for three, some for six, some for nine, others for twelve months, renewable, or not, as they answer expectation. And by this means I leave it to every one to make his own character with me; I preserve my charity, and my complacency; and enter directly with frankness, into conversation with him; and generally continue that freedom to the end of the respective person's lease.

Miss Gr. I wonder how many of your leases, brother, have been granted to ladies?

Sir Ch. Many, Charlotte, of the friendly sort: but the kind you archly mean, are out of the question at present. We were talking of esteem.

This insensibly led the conversation to love and courtship; and he said, [What do you think he said, Lucy] That he should not, perhaps, were he in love,

be over-forward to declare his passion by words: but rather shew it by his assiduities and veneration, unless he saw, that the suspense was painful to the object; and in this case it would be equally mean and insolent not to break silence, and put himself in the power of her, whose honour and delicacy ought to be dearer to him than his own.

What say you to this, Lucy?

Some think, proceeded he, that the days of courtship are the happiest days of life. But the man, who, as a lover, thinks so, is not to be forgiven. Yet it must be confessed, that *hope* gives an ardour which subsides in certainty.

Being called upon by Lord L. to be more explicit; I am not endeavouring, said he, to set up my particular humour for a general rule. For my own sake, I would not, by a too early declaration, drive a lady into reserves; since that would be to rob myself of those innocent freedoms, and of that complacency, to which an honourable lover might think himself intitled; and which might help him [don't be affrighted, ladies!] to develope the plaits and folds of the female heart.

This developement stuck with us women a little. We talked of it afterwards. And Miss Grandison *then* said, It was well her cousin Everard said not that. And *he* answered, Sir Charles may with more safety *steal a horse*, than I *look over the hedge*.

Miss Gr. Ay, cousin Grandison, that is because you are a rake. A name, believe me, of at least as much reproach, as that of an old maid.

Mr. Gr. Aspersing a whole class at once, Miss Charlotte! 'Tis contrary to your own maxim: and a class too (this of the rakes) that many a generous-spirited girl chooses out of, when she would dispose of herself, and her fortune.

Miss Gr. How malapert this Everard!

What Sir Charles *next* said, made him own the character more decently by his blushes.

The woman who chooses a rake, said he, does not consider, that all the sprightly airs for which she preferred him to a better man, either vanish in matrimony, or are shewn to others, to her mortal disquiet. The agreeable will be carried abroad: the disagreeable will be brought home. If he reform (and yet bad habits are very difficult to shake off) he will probably, from the reflections on his past guilty life, be an unsociable companion, should deep and true contrition have laid hold on him: if not, what has she chosen? He married not from honest principles: a rake despises matrimony: if still a rake, what hold will she have of him? A rake in *passion* is not a man in *love*. Such a one can seldom be in love: from a *laudable* passion he cannot. He has no delicacy. His love deserves a vile name: and if so, it will be strange, if in his eyes a common woman excel not his modest wife.

What he said, was openly approved by the gentlemen; tacitly by the ladies.

The subject changing to marriages of persons of unequal years; I knew, said Lord L. a woman of character, and not reckoned to want sense, who married at twenty a man of more than fifty, in hopes of burying him; but who lived with her upwards of twenty years; and then dying, she is now in treaty with a young rake of twenty-two. She is rich; and, poor woman! hopes to be happy. Pity, Sir Charles, she could not see the picture you have been drawing.

Retribution, replied Sir Charles, will frequently take its course. The lady, keeping in view one steady purpose: which was, that she would marry a young man, whenever death removed the old one; forgot, when she lost her husband, that she had been growing older for the last twenty years; and will now

very probably be the despised mate to the young husband, that her late husband was to her. Thirty years hence, the now young man will perhaps fall into the error of his predecessor, if he outlive the wife he is going to take, and be punished in the same way. These are what may be called punishments in kind. The violators of the social duties are frequently punished by the success of their own wishes. Don't you think, my lord, that it is suitable to the divine benignity, as well as justice, to lend its sanctions and punishments in aid of those duties which bind man to man?

Lord L. said some very good things. Your Harriet was not a mute: but you know, that my point is, to let you into the character and sentiments of Sir Charles Grandison: and whenever I can do them tolerable justice, I shall keep to that point. You will promise for me, you say, Lucy—I know you will.

But one might have expected that Dr. Bartlett would have said more than he did, on some of the subjects: yet Mr. Grandison, and he, and Miss Emily, were almost equally, and attentively, silent, till the last scene: and then the doctor said, I must shew you a little translation of Miss Emily's from the Italian. She blushed, and looked as if she knew not whether she should stay or go. I shall be glad to see any-thing of my Emily's, said Sir Charles. I know she is a mistress of that language, and elegant in her own. Pray, my dear (to her) let us be obliged, if it will not pain you.

She blushed, and bowed.

I must first tell you, said the doctor, that I was the occasion of her choosing so grave a subject as you will find that of the sonnet from which hers is taken.

A sonnet! said Miss Grandison. My dear little POETESS, you must set it, and sing it to us.

No, indeed, madam, said Miss Jervois, blushing still more, Dr. Bartlett would by no means have me a *poetess*, I am sure: and did you not, madam, speak that word, as if you meant to call me a name?

I think she did, said Sir Charles: nor would I have my Emily distinguished by any name, but that of a discreet, an ingenious, and an amiable young woman. The titles of *wit*, and *poetess*, have been disgraced too often by Sappho's and Corinna's ancient and modern. Was not this in your head, sister? But do not be disturbed, my Emily [the poor girl's eyes glistened]: I mean no check to liveliness and modest ingenuity. The easy production of a fine fancy, not made the business of life, or its boast, confer no denomination that is disgraceful, but very much the contrary.

I am very glad, for all *that*, said Miss Jervois, that my little translation is in plain prose: had it not, I should have been very much afraid to have it seen.

Even in *that* case, you need not to have been afraid, my good Miss Jervois, said Dr. Bartlett: Sir Charles is an admirer of good poetry: and Miss Grandison would have recollected the Philomela's, the Orinda's, and other names among her own sex, whose fine genius does it honour.

Your diffidence and sweet humility, my Emily, said Lady L. would, in you, make the most envied accomplishments amiable.

I am sure, said the lovely girl, hanging down her head, tears ready to start, I have reason to be affected with the subject.—The indulgent mother is described with so much sweet tenderness—O what pleasures do mothers lose, who want tenderness.

We all, either by eyes or voices, called for the sonnet, and her translation. Dr. Bartlett shewed them to us; and I send copies of both.

SONNET OF VINCENZIO DA FILICAJA.

Qual madre i figli con pietoso affetto
Mira, e d'amor si strugge a lor davante;
E un bacia in fronte, ed un si stringe al petto,
Uno tien sù i ginocchi, un sulle piante,
E mentre agli atti, a i gemiti, all' aspetto
Lor voglie intende sì diverse, e tante,
A questi un guardo, a quei dispensa un detto,
E se ride, o s'adira, è sempre amante:
Tal per noi Provvidenza alta infinita
Veglia, e questi conforta, e quei provvede,
E tutti ascolta, e porge a tutti aita.
E se niega talor grazia, o mercede,
O niega sol, perchè a pregar ne invita;
O negar finge, e nel negar concede.

"See a fond mother incircled by her children: with pious tenderness she looks around, and her soul even melts with maternal love. One she kisses on the forehead; and clasps another to her bosom. One she sets upon her knee; and finds a seat upon her foot for another. And while, by their actions, their lisping words, and asking eyes, she understands their various numberless little wishes, to these she dispenses a look; a word to those; and whether she smiles or frowns, 'tis all in tender love.

"Such to us, though infinitely high and awful, is PROVIDENCE: so it watches over us; comforting these; providing for those; listening to all; assisting every one: and if sometimes it denies the favour we implore, it denies but to invite our more earnest prayers; or, seeming to deny a blessing, grants one in that refusal."

When the translation was read aloud, the tears that before were starting, trickled down the sweet girl's cheeks. But the commendations every one joined in, and especially the praises given her by her guardian, drove away every cloud from her face.

LETTER XXXIII.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO MISS GRANDISON.

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE, Friday, March 17.

I HAVE already seen Captain Anderson. Richard Saunders, whom I sent with your letter, as soon as I came to town, found him at his lodgings near Whitehall. He expressed himself, on reading it, before the servant, with *indiscreet* warmth. I would not make minute enquiries after his words, because I intended an amicable meeting with him.

We met at four yesterday afternoon, at the Cocoa-tree in Pallmall: Lieut. Col. Mackenzie, and Major Dillon, two of his friends, with whom I had no acquaintance, were with him. The captain and I withdrew to a private room. The two gentlemen entered it with us.

You will on this occasion, I know, expect me to be particular: yet must allow, that I had no good cause to manage; since those points that had most weight (and which were the ground of your objections to him when you saw him in a near light) could not be pleaded without affronting him; and if they had, would hardly have met with his allowance; and could therefore have no force in the argument.

On the two gentlemen entering the room with us, without apology or objection, I asked the captain, if they were acquainted with the affair we met upon? He said, they were his dear and inseparable friends, and knew every secret of his heart. Perhaps in this case, Captain Anderson, returned I, it were as well they did not.

We are men of honour, Sir Charles Grandison, said the major, briskly.

I don't doubt it, Sir. But where the delicacy of a lady is concerned, the hearts of the principals should be the whole world to each other. But what is done, is done. I am ready to enter upon the affair before these gentlemen, if you choose it, captain.

You will find us to be gentlemen, Sir Charles, said the colonel.

The captain then began, with warmth, his own story. Indeed he told it very well. I was pleased, for my *sister's sake* (pardon me, Charlotte) that he did. He is not contemptible, either in person or understanding. He may be said, perhaps, to be an illiterate, but he is not an ignorant man; though not the person whom the friends of my Charlotte would think worthy of the first place in her heart.

After he had told his story (which I need not repeat to you) he insisted upon your promise: and his two friends declared in his favour, with airs, each man, a little too peremptory. I told them so; and that they must do me the justice to consider me as a man of some spirit, as well as themselves. I came hither with a friendly intention, gentlemen, said I. I do not love to follow the lead of hasty spirits: but if you expect to carry any point with me, it must not be either by raised voices, or heightened complexions.

Their features were all at once changed: and they said, they meant not to be warm.

I told the captain, that I would not enter into a minute defence of the lady, though my sister. I owned, that there had appeared a precipitation in her conduct. Her treatment at home, as she apprehended, was not answerable to her merits. She was young, and knew nothing of the world. Young ladies were often struck by appearances. You, Captain Anderson, said I, have advantages in per-

son and manner, that might obtain for you a young lady's attention: and as she believed herself circumstanced in her family, I wonder not that she lent an ear to the address of a gallant man; whose command in that neighbourhood, and, I doubt not, whose behaviour in that command, added to his consequence. But I take it for granted, Sir, that you met with difficulties from her, when she came to reflect upon the disreputation of a young woman's carrying on clandestinely a correspondence with a man, of whose address her father, then living, was not likely to approve. There was none of that violent passion on either side, that precludes reason, discretion, duty. It is no wonder then, that a woman of Charlotte Grandison's known good sense, should reflect, should consider: and perhaps the less, that you should therefore seek to engage her by promise. But what *was* the promise? It was not the promise that, it seems, you sought to engage her to make; To be absolutely yours, and no other man's: but it was, That she would not marry any other man without your consent, while you remained single. An unreasonable promise, however, I will presume to say, either to be proposed, or submitted to.

Sir! said the captain, and looked the soldier.

I repeated what I last said.

Sir! again said the captain; and looked upon his friends, who pointed each his head at the other, and at him, by turns—as if they had said, Very free language!

For, Sir, proceeded I, did it not give room to think, that you had either some doubts of your own merit with the lady, or of her affection and steadiness? And in either case, ought it to have been proposed? ought it to have been made? For my part, I should disdain to think of any woman for

a wife, who gave me reason to imagine, that she was likely to balance a moment, as to her choice of me, or any other man.

Something in that! said the colonel.

As you explain yourself, Sir Charles, said the major—

The captain, however, sat swelling. He was not so easily satisfied.

Your motive, we are not to question, captain, was love. Miss Grandison is a young woman whom any man may love. By the way, where a man is assured of a return in love, there is no occasion for a promise. But a promise *was* made. My sister is a woman of honour. She thinks herself bound by it; and she is content to lead a single life to the end of it, if you will not acquit her of this promise. Yet she leaves, and at the *time* did leave, *you* free. You will have the justice, Sir, to allow, that there is a generosity in her conduct to you, which remains for you to shew to her, since a promise should not be made but on equal terms. Would you hold her to it, and be not held yourself? She desires not to hold you. Let me tell you, captain, that if I had been in your situation, and had been able to *prevail upon myself* to endeavour to bring a lady to make me such a promise, I should have doubted her love of me, had she not sought to bind me to her by an equal tie. What! should I have said to myself, Is this lady dearer to *me* than all the women upon earth? Do I seek to bind her to me by a solemn promise, which shall give me a power over *her?* And has she so little regard for me, as not to value, whether I marry any other woman?

The gentlemen looked upon one another; but were silent. I proceeded.

Let us set this matter in its true light. Here is a young woman, who had suffered herself to be em-

harassed in a treaty, that her whole heart, she assures me, was never in. *This was her fault.* But know we not how inextricable are the entanglements of *love*, as it is called, when young women are brought to enter into correspondence with men? Our sex have opportunities of knowing the world, which the other have not. Experience, gentlemen, engaging with inexperience, and perhaps to the difference of twice the number of years [Sir! said the captain!] the combat must be too unequal. How artfully do men endeavour to draw in the women whom they think it worth their while to pursue!—But would any man here wish to marry a woman, who declares that she was insensibly drawn in beyond her purpose? Who shewed, when she refused to promise that she would be his, in preference to all other men, that she did not love him above all other men? Who, when she was prevailed on to fetter herself, made him not of consequence enough to herself to bind *him*? And, in a word, who has long ago declared to him, and steadily persists in the declaration, That she *never* will be his—You seem, gentlemen, to be men of spirit. Would you wish to marry the first woman on earth on these terms, if you *could* obtain her?—which, however, is not the case; since Miss Grandison's promise extends not so far as to oblige her to marry Captain Anderson.

The captain did not, he told me, like some part of what I had said; and still less some of the words I had used:—and seemed to be disposing his features to take a fiercer turn than became the occasion. I interrupted him therefore: I met you not, captain, said I, either to hear, or to obviate, cavils upon words. When I have told you, that I came with an amicable intention, I expect to be believed. I intend not offence. But let us be *men*. I am perhaps a younger man by ten years, than any one present:

but I have seen the world, as much as any man of my age; and know what is due to the character of a gentleman, whether it be Captain Anderson's, or my own: and expect not wilful misconstructions.

All I mean is, Sir, said the captain, that I will not be treated contemptuously, no, not even by the brother of Miss Grandison.

The brother of Miss Grandison, Sir, is not accustomed to treat any man contemptuously. Don't treat yourself so, and you are safe from unworthy treatment from me. Let me add, Sir, that I permit every man to fix his character with me, as he pleases. I will venture to say, I have a large charity; but I extend it not to credulity: but yet will always allow a third person to decide upon the justice of my intentions and actions.

The captain said, that he ascribed a great deal of my sister's *positiveness in her denial of him* (those were his words) to the time of my arrival in England; and he doubted not, that I had encouraged the proposals, either of Sir Walter Watkyns, or of Lord G. because of their quality and fortunes: and hence his difficulties were increased.

And then up he rose, slapt one hand upon the table, put the other on his sword, and was going to say some very fierce things, prefacing them with damning his blood; when I stood up: Hold, captain: be calm, if possible—Hear from me the naked truth: I will make you a fair representation; and when I have done, do you resume, if you think it necessary, that angry air you got up with, and see what you'll make of it.

His friends interposed. He sat down, half out of breath with anger. His swelled features went down by degrees.

The truth of the matter is strictly and briefly this.

All my sister's difficulties (which, perhaps, were

greater in apprehension than in fact) ended with my father's life. I made it my business, on my arrival, as soon as possible, to ascertain my sisters' fortunes. Lord L. married the elder. The two gentlemen you have mentioned made their addresses to the younger. I knew nothing of you, Captain Anderson. My sister had wholly kept the affair between you and her, in her own breast. She had not revealed it even to her sister. The reason she gives, and to which you, Sir, could be no stranger, was, that she was determined never to be yours. The subject requires explicitness, Captain Anderson: and I am not accustomed to palliate, whenever it does. She hoped to prevail upon you to leave her as generously free, as she had left you. I do assure you, upon my honour, that she favours not either of the gentlemen. I know not the man she *does* favour. It is I, her brother, not herself, that am solicitous for her marrying. And upon the indifference she expressed to change her condition, on terms to which no objection could be made, I supposed she must have a secret preference to some other man. I was afterwards informed, that letters had passed between her and you, by a lady, who had it from a gentleman of your acquaintance. You have shewn me, Sir, by the presence of these gentlemen, that you were not so careful of the secret, as my sister had been.—They looked upon one another.

I charged my sister, upon this discovery, with reserve to me: but offered her my service in her own way; assuring her, that if her heart were engaged, the want of quality, title, and fortune, should not be of weight with me; and that whomsoever she accepted for her husband, him would I receive for my brother.

The colonel and the major extravagantly applauded

a behaviour on this occasion, which deserved no more than a common approbation.

She solemnly assured me, proceeded I, that although she held herself bound by the promise which youth, inexperience, and solicitation, had drawn her in to make, she resolved to perform it by a perpetual single life, if it were insisted upon. And thus, Sir, you see, that it depends upon you to keep Charlotte Grandison a single woman, till you marry some other lady (a power, let me tell you, that no man ought to seek to obtain over a young woman) or, generously to acquit her of it, and leave her as free as she has left you.—And now, gentlemen (to the major and colonel) if you come hither not so much parties as judges, I leave this matter upon your consideration; and will withdraw for a few moments.

I left every mouth ready to burst into words; and walked into the public room. There I met with Colonel Martin, whom I had seen abroad; and who had just asked after Major Dillon. He, to my great surprise, took notice to me of the business that brought me thither.

You see, my sister, the consequence you were of to Captain Anderson. He had not been able to forbear boasting of the honour you had done him. Dear Charlotte—How unhappy was the man, that your pride should make you think yourself concerned to keep secret an affair that he thought a glory to him to make known to many! For we see (shall I not say, to the advantage of this gentleman's character?) that he has many dear and *inseparable friends*, from whom he *concealed not any secret of his heart.*

Colonel Mackenzie came out soon after, and we withdrew to the corner of the room. He talked a great deal of the strength of the captain's passion; of the hopes he had conceived of making his fortune,

through the interest of a family to which he imputed consideration: he made me many compliments: he talked of the great detriment this long suspended affair had been to his friend; and told me, with a grave countenance, that the captain was grown as many years older, as it had been in hand; and was ready to rate very highly so much time lost in the prime of life. In short, he ascribed to the captain the views and the disappointments of a military fortune-hunter too plainly for his honour in my eye, had I been disposed to take *proper* notice of the meaning of what he said.

After having heard him out, I desired the colonel to let me know what all this meant, and what were the captain's expectations.

He paraded on again, a long time; and asked me at last, if there were no hopes that the lady—

None at all, interrupted I. She has steadily declared as much. Charlotte Grandison is a woman of fine sense. She has great qualities. She has insuperable objections to the captain, which are founded on a more perfect knowledge of the man, and of her own heart, than she could have at first. It is not my intention to depreciate him with his friend: I shall not, therefore, enter into particulars. Let me know, colonel, what the gentleman pretends to. He is passionate, I see: I am not a tame man: but God forbid, that Captain Anderson, who hoped to be benefited by an alliance with the sister, should receive hurt, or hard treatment, from her brother!

Here Colonel Martin, who had heard something of what was said, desired to speak with Colonel Mackenzie. They were not so distant, but my ear unavoidably caught part of their subject. Colonel Martin expatiated, in a very high manner, on my character, when I was abroad.. He imputed bravery to me (a great article among military men, and

with you ladies) and I know not how many good qualities—And Colonel Mackenzie took him in with him to the other two gentlemen: where, I suppose, every-thing that had passed was repeated.

After a while, I was desired by Colonel Martin in the name of the gentlemen, to walk in; he himself sitting down in the public room.

They received me with respect. I was obliged to hear and say a great many things, that I had said and heard before: but at last two proposals were made me; either of which, they said, if complied with, would be taken as laying the captain under very high obligation.

Poor man! I had compassion for him, and closed with one of them; declining the other for a reason which I did not give to them. To say truth, Charlotte, I did not choose to promise my *interest* in behalf of a man, of whose merit I was not assured, had I been able to challenge any, as perhaps I might by Lord W.'s means; who stands well with proper persons. A man ought to think himself, in some measure, accountable for warm recommendations; especially where the public is concerned: and could I give my promise, and be cool as to the performance? And I should think myself also answerable to a worthy man, and to every one connected with him, if I were a means of lifting one less worthy over his head. I chose therefore to do that service to him, for which I am responsible only to *myself*. After I have said this, my sister must ask me no questions.

I gave a rough draught, at the captain's request, of the manner in which I would have releases drawn. Colonel Martin was desired to walk in. And all the gentlemen promised to bury in silence all that had ever come to their knowledge, of what had passed between Charlotte Grandison, and Captain Anderson.

Let not the mentioning to you these measures, hurt you, my sister. Many young ladies of sense and family have been drawn into still greater inconveniencies than you have suffered. Persons of eminent abilities (I have a very high opinion of my Charlotte's) seldom err in *small* points. Most young women, who begin a correspondence with our designing sex, think they can stop when they will. But it is not so. We and the dark spirit that sets us at work, which we sometimes mis-call love, will not permit you to do so. Men and women are devils to one another. They need no other tempter.

All will be completed to-morrow; and your written promise, of consequence, given up. I congratulate my sister on the happy conclusion of this affair. You are now your own mistress, and free to choose for yourself. I should never forgive myself, were I, who have been the means of freeing you from one controul, to endeavour to lay you under another. Think not either of Sir Walter, or of Lord G. if your heart declare not in favour of either. You have sometimes thought me *earnest* in behalf of Lord G. But I have never spoken in his favour, but when you have put me upon answering objections to him, which I have thought insufficient: and indeed, Charlotte, some of your objections have been so slight, that I was ready to believe, you put them for the pleasure of having them answered.

My Charlotte need not doubt of admirers, whereever she sets her foot. And I repeat, that whoever be the man she inclines to favour, she may depend upon the approbation and good offices of

Her ever-affectionate brother,

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER XXXIV.

MISS HARRIET BYRON TO MISS SELBY.

Friday, March 18.

I SEND you inclosed (to be returned by the first opportunity) Sir Charles's letter to his sister, acquainting her with the happy conclusion of the affair between Captain Anderson and her. Her brother, as you will see, acquits her not of precipitation. If he did, it would have been an impeachment of his justice. O the dear Charlotte!—how her pride is piqued at the meanness of the man!—But no more of this subject, as the letter is before you.

And now, my dear and honoured friends, let me return you a thousand thanks for the great pacquet of my letters, just sent me, with a most indulgent one from my aunt, and another from my uncle.

I have already put into the two ladies' hands, and my lord's, without reserve, all the letters that reach to the masquerade affair, from the time of my setting out for London; and when they have read those, I have promised them more. This confidence has greatly obliged them; and they are employed, with no small earnestness, in perusing them.

This gives me an opportunity of pursuing my own devices—And what, besides scribbling, do you think one of them is?—A kind of persecution of Dr. Bartlett; by which, however, I suspect, that I myself am the greatest sufferer. He is an excellent man; and I make no difficulty of going to him in his closet; encouraged by his assurances of welcome.

Let me stop to say, my Lucy, that when I approach this good man in his retirement, surrounded by his books, his table generally covered with those

on pious subjects, I, in my heart, congratulate the saint, and inheritor of future glory; and, in that great view, am the more desirous to cultivate his friendship.

And what do you think is our subject? Sir Charles, I suppose, you guess—And so it is, either in the middle or latter end of the few conversations we have yet had time to hold: but, I do assure you, we begin with the sublimest; though I must say, to my shame, that it has not so much of my heart, at present, as once it had, and I hope again will one day have—The great and glorious truths of Christianity, are this subject; which *yet*, from this good Dr. Bartlett, warms my heart, as often as he enters into it. But this very subject, sublime as it is, brings on the other, as of consequence: for Sir Charles Grandison, without making an ostentatious pretension to religion, is the very Christian in practice, that these doctrines teach a man to be. Must not then the doctrines introduce the mention of a man who endeavours humbly to imitate the divine example? It was upon good grounds he once said, That as he must one day die, it was matter of no moment to *him*, whether it were to-morrow, or forty years hence.

The ladies had referred me to the doctor himself for a more satisfactory account than they had given me, how Sir Charles and he first came acquainted. I told him so, and asked his indulgence to me in this enquiry.

He took it kindly. He had, he said, the history of it written down. His nephew, whom he often employs as his amanuensis, should make me out, from that little history, an account of it, which I might shew, he was pleased to say, to such of my select friends, as I entrusted with the knowledge of my own heart.

I shall impatiently expect the abstract of this little

history; and the more, as the doctor tells me, there will be included some particulars of Sir Charles's behaviour abroad in his younger life, and of Mr. Beauchamp, whom the doctor speaks of with love, as his patron's dearest friend, and whom he calls a second Sir Charles Grandison.

* *

See, my Lucy, the reward of an open heart. My communicativeness has been already encouraged with the perusal of two letters from the same excellent man to Doctor Bartlett; to whom, from early days (as I shall be soon more particularly informed) he has given an account of all his conduct and movements.

The doctor drew himself in, however, by reading to Lord L. and the ladies, and me, a paragraph or two out of one of them: and he has even allowed me to give my grandmamma and aunt a sight of them. Return them, Lucy, with the other letter, by the very next post. He says, he can deny me nothing. I wish I may not be too bold with him— As for Miss Grandison, she vows, that she will not let the good man rest till she gets him to communicate what he shall not absolutely declare to be a secret, to *us* three sisters, and my Lord L. If the first man, she says, could not resist *one* woman, how will the doctor deal with *three*, not one of them behindhand with the *first* in curiosity? And all loving him, and whom he professes to esteem?—You see, Lucy, that Miss Grandison has pretty well got up her spirits again.

Just now Miss Grandison has related to me a conversation that passed between my Lord and Lady L. herself, and Doctor Bartlett; in which the subject was their brother and I. The ladies and my lord are intirely in my interests, and regardful of my

punctilio. They roundly told the doctor, that, being extremely earnest to have their brother marry, they knew not the person living whom they wished to call his wife preferably to Miss Byron; could they be sure that I were absolutely disengaged. Now, doctor, said Miss Grandison, tell us frankly, What is your opinion of our choice for a more than nominal sister.

I will make no apologies, Lucy, for repeating all that was repeated to me of this conversation.

Lord L. Ay, my good Doctor Bartlett, let us have your free opinion.

Dr. B. Miss Byron (I pronounce upon knowledge, for she has more than once, since I have been down, done me the honour of entering into very free and serious conversations with me) is one of the most excellent of women.

And then he went on, praising me for ingenuousness, seriousness, cheerfulness, and for other good qualities, which his partiality found out in me: and added, Would to heaven that she were neither more nor less than Lady Grandison!

God bless him! thought I—Don't you join, my Lucy, to say, at this place, you, who love me so dearly, God bless you, Doctor Bartlett?

Lady L. Well, but, doctor, you say that Miss Byron talks freely with you; cannot you gather from her whether she is inclined to marriage? Whether she is absolutely disengaged? Lady D. made a proposal to her for Lord D. and insisted on an answer to this very question: that matter is gone off. As our *guest*, we would not have Miss Byron think us impertinent. She is very delicate. And as she is so amiably frank hearted, those things she chooses not to mention of her own accord, one would not, you know, officiously put to her.

This was a little too much affected. Don't you

think so, Lucy? The doctor, it is evident by his answer, did.

Dr. B. It is not likely that such a subject can arise between Miss Byron and me: and it is strange, methinks, that ladies calling each other sisters, should not be absolutely mistresses of this question.

Lord L. Very right, Doctor Bartlett. But ladies will, in these points, take a compass before they explain themselves. A man of Dr. Bartlett's penetration and uprightness, ladies, should not be treated with distance. We are of opinion, doctor, that Miss Byron, supposing that she is absolutely disengaged, could make no difficulty to prefer my brother to all the men in the world. What think you?

Dr. B. I have no doubt of it: she thinks herself under obligation to him. She is goodness itself. She must love goodness. Sir Charles's person, his vivacity, his address, his understanding—What woman would not prefer him to all the men she ever saw? He has met with admirers among the sex in every nation in which he has set his foot [Ah! Lucy!]. You, ladies, must have seen, forgive me (bowing to each) that Miss Byron has a more than grateful respect for your brother.

Miss Gr. We think so, doctor; and wanted to know if *you* did: and so, as my lord says, fetched a little compass about; which we should not have done to *you*. But you say, that my brother has had numbers of admirers—Pray, doctor, is there any *one* lady (we imagine there is) that he has preferred to another, in the different nations he has travelled through?

Lord L. Ay, doctor, we want to know this; and if you thought there were *not*, we should make no scruple to explain ourselves, as well to Miss Byron, as to my brother.

Don't you long to know what answer the doctor

returned to this, Lucy? I was out of breath with impatience, when Miss Grandison repeated it to me.

The doctor hesitated—And at last said; I wish with all my heart, Miss Byron could be Lady Grandison.

Miss Gr. COULD be?—*Could* be, said each.

And COULD be? said the fool to Miss Grandison, when she repeated it, her heart quite sunk.

Dr. B. (smiling) You hinted, ladies, that you are not *sure*, that Miss Byron is absolutely disengaged. But, to be open and above-board, I have reason to believe, that your brother would be concerned, if he knew it, that you should think of putting such a question as this to any-body but himself. Why don't you? He once complained to me, that he was afraid his sisters looked upon him as a reserved man; and condescended to call upon me to put him right, if I thought his appearance such as would give you grounds for the surmise. There are two or three affairs of intricacy that he is engaged in, and particularly one, that hangs in suspense; and he would not be fond, I believe, of mentioning it, till he can do it with certainty: but else, ladies, there is not a more frank-hearted man in the world, than *your* brother.

See, Lucy, how cautious we ought to be in passing judgment on the actions of others, especially on those of good men, when we want to fasten blame upon them; perhaps with a low view (envying their superior worth) to bring them down to our own level!—For are we not all apt to measure the merits of others by our own standard, and to give praise or dispraise to actions or sentiments, as they square with our own?

Lord L. Perhaps, Doctor Bartlett, you don't think yourself at liberty to answer, whether these particu-

lar affairs are of such a nature, as will interfere with the *hopes* we have of bringing to effect a marriage between my brother and Miss Byron?

Dr. B. I had rather refer to Sir Charles himself on this subject. If any man in the world deserves from prudence and integrity of heart to be happy in this life, that man is Sir Charles Grandison. But he is not *quite* happy.

Ah, Lucy!– The doctor proceeded. Your brother, ladies, has often said to me, That there was hardly a man living who had a more sincere value for the sex than he had; who had been more distinguished by the favour of worthy women; yet who had paid dearer for that distinction than he had done.

Lady L. Paid dearer! Good Heaven!

Miss Gr. How could that be?

Lord L. I always abroad heard the ladies reckon upon Sir Charles, as their own man. His vivacity, his personal accomplishments, his politeness, his generosity, his bravery!—Every woman who spoke of him, put him down for a man of gallantry. And is he not a *truly* gallant man?—I never mentioned it before—But a Lady Olivia, of Florence, was much talked of, when I was in that city, as being in love with the handsome Englishman, as our brother was commonly called there—

Lady Olivia! Lady Olivia! repeated each sister; and why did not your lordship?—

Because, though she was in love with him, he had no thoughts of her: and, as the doctor says, she is but *one* of those who, wherever he set his foot, admired him.

Bless me, thought I, what a black swan is a good man!—Why (as I have often thought, to the credit of our sex) will not all the men be good?

Lady L. My lord, you must tell us more of this Lady Olivia.

Lord L. I know very little more of her. She was reputed to be a woman of high quality and fortune, and great spirit. I once saw her. She is a fine figure of a woman. Dr. Bartlett can, no doubt, give you an account of her.

Miss Gr. Ah, doctor! What a history could you give us of our brother, if you pleased!—But as there is no likelihood that this lady will be any thing to my brother, let us return to our first subject.

Lady L. By all means. Pray, Dr. Bartlett, do you know what my brother's opinion is of Miss Byron?

Dr. B. The highest that man can have of woman.

Lady L. As we are so very desirous to see my brother happily married, and think he never could have a woman so likely to make him happy, would you advise us to propose the alliance to him? We would not to *her*, unless we thought there were room to hope for his approbation, and that in a very high degree.

Dr. B. I am under some concern, my dear ladies, to be thought to know more of your brother's heart, than sisters do, whom he loves so dearly, and who equally love him. I beseech you, give me not so much more consequence with him than you imagine you have yourselves. I shall be afraid, if you do, that the favour I wish to stand in with you, is owing more to your brother's distinction of me, than to your own hearts.

Lord L. I see not why we may not talk to my brother directly on this head. Whence is it, that we are all three insensibly drawn in, by each other's example, to this distance between him and us?—It is not *his* fault. Did we ever ask him a question,

that he did not directly answer, and that without shewing the least affectation or reserve?

Miss Gr. He came over to us all at once so perfect, after an eight or nine years absence, with so much power, and such a will to do us good, that we were awed into a kind of reverence for him.

Lady L. Too great obligations from one side, will indeed create distance on the other. Grateful hearts will always retain a sense of favours heaped upon them.

Dr. B. You would give pain to his noble heart, did he think, that you put such a value upon what he has done. I do assure you, that he thinks he has hardly performed his duty by his sisters: and, as occasions may still offer, you will *find* he thinks so. But let me beg of you to treat him without reserve or diffidence; and that you would put to him all those questions which you would wish to be answered. You will find him, I dare say, very candid, and very explicit.

Miss Gr. That shall be my task, when I next see him. But, dear Doctor Bartlett, if you love us, communicate to us all that is proper for us to see, of the correspondence that passes between him and you.

The doctor, it seems, bowed; but answered not.

So you see, Lucy, upon the whole, that I have no great *reason* to build so much, as my uncle, in his last letter, imagines I do, on the interest of these ladies and my Lord L. with their brother. *Two or their intricate affairs on his hands:* one of them *still in suspense;* of which, for that reason, he makes a secret: he is not *quite happy: greatly distinguished by the favour of worthy women:* who would wonder at that?—But *has paid dear for the distinction!*—What can one say? What can one think? He once said

himself, that his life was a various life; and that some unhappy things had befallen him. If the prudence of such a man could not shield him from misfortune, who can be exempted from it?—And from *worthy* women too!—That's the wonder!—But is this Olivia one of the *worthy* women?—I fancy he must despise us all. I fancy he will never think of incumbering himself with one of a sex, that has made him pay so dear for the general distinction he has met with from it. As to his politeness to us; a man may *afford* to shew politeness to those he has resolved to keep at distance from his heart.

But, ah, Lucy!—There must be one happy woman, whom he wishes *not* to keep at distance. This is the affair, that *hangs in suspense;* and of which, therefore, he chooses to say nothing.

* *

I have had the pleasure of a visit from my godfather Deane. He dined with us this day in his way to town. The ladies, Dr. Bartlett, and my Lord L. are charmed with him. Yet I had pain mingled with my pleasure. He took me aside, and charged me *so* home—He was *too* inquisitive. I never knew him to be so *very* urgent to know my heart. But I was frank: very frank: I should hardly have been excusable, if I had not, to so good a man, and so dear a friend. Yet he scarce knew how to be satisfied with my frankness.

He will have it, that I look thinner and paler than I used to do. That may very well be. My very *soul*, at times—I know not how I am—Sir Charles is in suspense too, from somebody abroad. From my heart I pity him. Had he but some faults; some great blemishes; I fancy I should be easier about him. But to hear nothing of him, but what is so greatly praise-worthy, and my heart so delighted with acts of beneficence—And now, Mr. Deane,

at this visit, running on in his praises, and commending, instead of blaming me, for my presumptuous thoughts; nay, exalting me, and telling me, that I deserve him—that I deserve Sir Charles Grandison! —Why did he not chide me? Why did he not dissuade me?—Neither fortune nor merit answerable!—A man who knows so well what to do with fortune!—The Indies, my dear, ought to be his! What a king would he make! Power could not corrupt such a mind as his. Cæsar, said Dr. Bartlett, speaking of him before Mr. Deane and all of us, was not quicker to destroy, than Sir Charles Grandison is to relieve. Emily's eyes, at the time, ran over with joy at the expression; and, drying them, she looked proudly round on us all, as if she had said, This is my guardian!

But what do you think, Lucy? Mr. Deane will have it, that he sees a young passion in Miss Jervois for her guardian!—God forbid!—A young love may be conquered, I believe; but *who* shall caution the innocent girl? She must have a sweet pleasure in it, creeping, stealing, upon her. How can so unexperienced an heart, the object so meritorious, resist or reject the indulgence? But, O my Emily! sweet girl! do not let your love get the better of your gratitude, lest it make you unhappy! and, what would be still more affecting to a worthy heart, make the generous object of a passion that cannot be gratified, unhappy; and for *that* very reason; because he cannot reward it! See you not already, that, with all his goodness, he is not quite happy? He is a sufferer from *worthy* women!—O my Emily, do not *you* add to the infelicity of a man, who can make but *one* woman happy; yet wishes to befriend all the world—But hush! selfish adviser! Should not Harriet Byron have thought of this in time?—Yet she knew not, that he had any previous engage-

ments: and may death lay his cold hand upon her heart, before she become an additional disturbance to his! He knows not, I hope he guesses not, though Dr. Bartlett has found me out as well as the sisters, that I am captivated, heart and soul, by his merits. May he never know it, if the knowledge of it would give him the shadow of uneasiness!

I owned to Mr. Deane, that my Lord L. and the ladies were warmly interested in my favour. Thank God for that! he said. All must happen to his wish. Nay, he would have it, that Sir Charles's goodness would be *rewarded* in having such a wife: but what wife can do more than her duty to any husband who is not absolutely a savage? How then can all I could do, *reward* such a man as this?

But, Lucy, don't you blush for me, on reading this last page of my writing? You *may*, since I blush myself on re-perusing it. For shame, Harriet Byron, put a period to this letter!—I will; nor subscribe to it so much as the initials of my name.

LETTER XXXV.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON TO DR. BARTLETT.

[*Inclosed in the preceding.*]

Friday, March 17.

LAST night I saw interred the remains of my worthy friend Mr. Danby. I had caused his two nephews and his niece to be invited: but they did not attend.

As the will was not to be opened till the funeral was over, about which the good man had given me verbal directions; apprehending, I believe, expostu-

lations from me, had I known the contents; I sent to them this morning to be present at the opening.

Their attorney, Mr. Sylvester, a man of character, and good behaviour, brought me a letter, signed by all three, excusing themselves on very slight pretences, and desiring that *he* might be present for them. I took notice to him, that the behaviour of his principals over-night and now, was neither respectful to the memory of their uncle; nor civil, with regard to me. He honestly owned, that Mr. Danby having acquainted his two nephews, a little before he died, that he had made his will, and that they had very little to expect from him, they, who had been educated by his direction, and made merchants, at his expence, with hopes given them, that he would, at his death, do very handsomely for them, and had never disobliged him, could not be present at the opening of a will, the contents of which they expected to be so mortifying to them.

I opened it in presence of this gentleman. The preamble was an angry one; giving reasons for his resentment against the father of these young persons, who (though his brother) had once, as I hinted to you at Colnebrook, made a very shocking attempt upon his life. I was hurt, however, to find a resentment carried so far as against the innocent children of the offender, and into the last will of so good a man; that will so lately made, as within three weeks of his death; and he given over for three months before.

Will the tenderness due to the memory of a friend permit me to ask, Where would that resentment have stopt, had the private man been a monarch, which he could carry into his last will?

But see we not, on the other hand, that these children, had they power, would have punished their uncle, for disposing, as he thought fit, of his own

fortune; no part of which came to him by inheritance?

They had been educated, as I have said, at his expence; and, in the phrase of business, well put out: expences their careless father would not have been at: he is, in every light, a bad man. How much better had these children's title been to a more considerable part of their uncle's estate than he has bequeathed to them, had they been thankful for the benefits they had actually received! Benefits, which are of such a nature, that they cannot be taken from them.

Mr. Danby has bequeathed to each of the three, one thousand pounds; but on express condition, that they signify to his executor, within two months after his demise, their acceptance of it, in full of all demands upon his estate. If they do not (tender being duly made) the three thousand pounds are to be carried to the uses of the will.

He then appoints his executor; and makes him residuary legatee; giving for reason, that he had been the principal instrument in the hand of Providence, of saving his life.

He bequeaths some generous remembrances to three of his friends in France; and requests his executor to dispose of three thousand pounds to charitable uses, either in France or England, as he thinks fit, and to what particular objects he pleases.

And, by an inventory annexed to the will, his effects in money, bills, actions, and jewels, are made to amount to upwards of thirty thousand pounds sterling.

Mr. Sylvester complimented me on this great *windfall*, as he called it; and assured me, that it should be his advice to his clients, that each take his and her legacy, and sit down contented with it: and he believed, that they the rather would, as,

from what their uncle had hinted, they apprehended, that the sum of a hundred pounds each, was all they had to hope for.

I enquired into the inclinations and views of the three; and received a very good general account of them; with a hint, that the girl was engaged in a love-affair.

Their father, after his vile attempt upon his brother's life, was detested by all his friends and relations, and went abroad; and the last news they heard of him was, that he was in a very ill state of health, and in unhappy circumstances, in Barbadoes: and very probably by this time is no more.

I desired Mr. Sylvester to advise the young people to recollect themselves; and said, that I had a disposition to be kind to them: and as he could give me only general accounts of their views, prospects, and engagements, I wished they would, with marks of confidence in me, give me particular ones: but that, whether they complimented me as I wished, or not, I was determined, for the sake of their uncle's memory, to do all reasonable service to them. Tell them, in a word, Mr. Sylvester, and do you forgive the seeming vanity, that I am not accustomed to suffer the narrowness of other people's hearts to contract mine.

The man went away, very much pleased with what I had said; and in about two hours, sent me a note, in the names of all his clients, expressing gratitude and obligation; and requesting me to allow him to introduce them all three to me this afternoon.

I have some necessary things to do, and persons to see, in relation to my deceased friend, which will be dispatched over a dish of tea. And therefore I have invited the honest attorney, and his three clients, to sup with me.

I will not send this to Colnebrook, where I hope you are all happy [All must; for are they not all good? And are not *you* with them?] till I accompany it with the result of this evening's conversation. Yet I am too fond of every occasion that offers to tell you what, however, you cannot doubt, how much I am *yours*, not to sign to that truth the name of

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER XXXVI.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON. IN CONTINUATION.

Friday night, March 17.

Mr. Sylvester, an honest pleasure shining in his countenance, presented to me, first, Miss Danby; then, each of her brothers; who all received my welcome with a little consciousness, as if they had something to reproach themselves with, and were generously ashamed to be overcome. The sister had the least of it: and I saw by that, that she was the least blameable, not the least modest; since I dare say she had but followed her brothers' lead; while they looked down and bashful, as having all that was done amiss to answer for.

Miss Danby is a very pretty, and very genteel young woman. Mr. Thomas and Mr. Edward Danby are agreeable in their persons and manners, and want not sense.

In the first moment I dissipated all their uneasiness; and we sat down together with confidence in each other. The honest attorney had prepared them to be easy after the first introduction.

I offer not to read to you, said I, the will of your

uncle. It is sufficient to repeat what Mr. Sylvester has, no doubt, told you; That you are each of you intitled by it to a thousaud pounds.

They all bowed; and the elder brother signified their united consent to accept it upon the terms of the will.

Three thousand pounds more are to be disposed of to charitable uses, at the discretion of the executor: three other legacies are left to three different gentlemen in France: and the large remainder, which will not be less than four-and-twenty thousand pounds, falls to the executor, and residuary legatee, equally unexpected and undesired.

The elder brother said, God bless you with it, Sir. The second said, It could not have fallen to a worthier man. The young lady's lips moved: but words proceeded not from them. Yet her eyes shewed, that her lips made me a compliment.

It is ungenerous, Dr. Bartlett, to keep expecting minds in suspense, though with a view of obliging in the end. The surprise intended to be raised on such an occasion, carries in its appearance an air of insult. I have, said I, a great desire to do you service. Now let me know, gentlemen (I will talk to the young lady singly, perhaps) what your expectations were upon your uncle; what will do for each of you, to enable you to enter the world with advantage in the way you have been brought up; and as I told your worthy friend, Mr. Sylvester, I will be ready to do you all reasonable service.—But, hold, Sir; for Mr. Thomas Danby was going to speak; you shall consider before you answer me. The matter is of importance. Be explicit. I love openness and sincerity. I will withdraw, till you have consulted together. Command me in when you have determined.

I withdrew to my study: and, in about a quarter

of an hour, they let me know, that they were ready to attend me. I went in to them. They looked upon one another. Come, gentlemen, don't fear to speak: consider me, for your uncle's sake, as your brother.

The elder brother was going to speak; but hesitating, Come, said I, let me *lead* you into the matter —Pray, Sir, what is your present situation? What are your present circumstances?

My father, Sir, was unhappy—My father—

Well, Sir, no more of your father—He *could* do nothing for you. Your whole dependence, I presume, was upon your uncle.

My uncle, Sir, gave us all our education—My uncle gave each brother a thousand guineas for putting out each to a merchant; five hundred only of which sums were so employed; and the other five hundred guineas are in safe hands.

Your uncle, Sir, all reverence to his memory, was an excellent man.

Indeed, Sir, he was.

And what, Sir, is the business you were brought up to?

My master is a West-India merchant.

And what, Mr. Danby, are your prospects in that way?

Exceeding hopeful, Sir, they would have been—My master intended to propose to my uncle, had he lived to come to town, to take me in a quarter-partner with him directly; and, in a twelvemonth's time, a half-partner.

A very good sign in your favour, Sir. You must have behaved yourself well.—And will he now do it?

Ah! Sir—And was silent.

Upon what terms, Mr. Danby, would he have

proposed to your uncle to take you in a quarter-partner?

Sir—he talked of—

Of what?

Four thousand pounds, Sir. But my uncle never gave us hopes of more than three thousand guineas each, besides the thousand he had given: and when he had so much reason to resent the unhappy steps of my father, he let us know, that he would not do *any-thing* for us: and, to say truth, the thousand pounds left us in the will, is more than we expected.

Very ingenuous. I love you for your sincerity. But, pray, tell me, Will four thousand pounds be well laid out in a quarter-partnership?

To say truth, Sir, my master had a view, at the year's end, if nothing unexpected happened to prevent it, to give me his niece in marriage; and then to admit me into half of the business, which would be equivalent to a fortune of as much more.

And do you love the young woman?

Indeed I do.

And does she countenance your address?

If her uncle—I don't doubt, if *her* uncle could have prevailed upon *my* uncle—

Well, Sir, I am your uncle's executor. Now, Sir, (to Mr. Edward Danby) let me know *your* situation; *your* prospects?

Sir, I was put to a French wine-merchant. My master is in years. I am the sole manager of his business; and he would leave off to me, I believe, and to his nephew, who knows not so much of it as I do; nor has the acquaintance, either in France or England, that I have; could I raise money to purchase half the stock.

And what, Sir, is necessary for that purpose?

O Sir! at least six thousand pounds.—But had my

uncle left me the three thousand I once hoped for, I could have got the other half at an easy interest; for I am well beloved, and have always borne a good character.

What did you suppose your uncle would do with the bulk of his fortune (you judged it, I suppose, to be large) if you expected no more than three thousand guineas each at the most, besides what he had given you?

We all thought, Sir, said Mr. Edward Danby, it would be *yours*, from the time that he owed his life to your courage and conduct. We never entertained hopes of being his heirs general: and he several times told me, when I was in France, that *you* should be his heir.

He never hinted that to me. What I did was as necessary to be done for my own safety, as for his. He much over-rated my services. But what are your prospects, Mr. Edward Danby, in the French wine-trade?

O Sir, very great!—

And will your master leave off to you and his nephew, think you?

I dare say he would, and be glad of retiring to Enfield, where he has a house he is so fond of, that he would be continually there, by his good-will.

And have you, Sir, any prospect of adding to your circumstances by marriage?

Women are a drug, Sir. I have no doubt of offers, if once I were my own master.

I started. His sister looked angry. His brother was not pleased: Mr. Sylvester, who, it seems, is an old bachelor, laughed—

A *true* merchant this already! thought I.

Well, now, shall I have your consents, gentlemen, to take your sister aside?—Will you trust yourself

with me, Miss Danby? Or had you rather answer my questions in company?

Sir, your character, your goodness, is so well known, I scruple not to attend you.

I took her hand, and led her to my study, leaving the door open to the drawing-room in which they were. I seated her. Then sat down, but still held her hand.

Now, my dear Miss Danby, you are to suppose me, as the executor of your uncle, his representative. If you had that good uncle before you, and he was urging you to tell him what would make you happy, with an assurance, that he would do all in his power towards it; and if you would open your mind freely to him; with equal freedom open it to me. There was only this difference between us: he had resentments against your father, which he carried too far when he extended them to his innocent children [but it was an atrocious attempt, that embittered his otherwise benevolent spirit]: I have no resentment; and am armed with his power, and have all the will he ever could have, to serve you. And now, let me know, what will effectually do it?

The worthy girl wept. She looked down. She seemed as if she were pulling threads out of her handkerchief: but was unable to return any other answer, than what her eyes, once cast up, as if to Heaven, made for her.

Give me, my good Miss Danby (I would not distress you) give me, as your brothers did of *their* situation, some account of *yours*. Do you live with either of your brothers?

No, Sir. I live with an aunt: my mother's sister.

Is she good to you?

Yes, Sir, very good. But she has children; and cannot be so good as she would be to me. Yet she

has always been kind; and has made the best of my uncle's allowance for my education: and my fortune, which is unbroken, is the same sum that he gave my brothers: and it is in good hands: and the interest of it, with my aunt's additional goodness and management, enables me to make a genteel figure: and, with my own housewifery, I never have wanted some little matters for my pocket.

Good girl! thought I—Mercantile carle! thy brother Edward, pretty one! How *dared* he to say, that women are drugs?—Who, in their œconomy, short as their power is, are generally superior to men!

Your uncle was very good to put you upon a foot with your brothers, in his bounty to them; as now he has also done in his will: and assure yourself, that his representative will be equally kind to you as to your brothers. But shall I ask you, as your uncle would have done—Is there any one man in the world, whom you prefer to another?

She was silent; looked down; and again picked her handkerchief.

I called in her elder brother (not the drug-merchant) and asked him, What he knew of his sister's affections?

Why, my good Dr. Bartlett, are these women ashamed of owning a laudable passion? Surely there is nothing shameful in *discreet* love.

Her brother acquainted me with the story of her love; the good girl blushing, and looking down all the while, with the consciousness of a sweet thief, who had stolen a heart, and, being required to restore it, had been guilty of a new cheat, and given her own instead of it.

The son of Mr. Galliard, an eminent Turkey-merchant, is the man with whom she has made this exchange. His father, who lives in the neighbourhood of her aunt, had sent him abroad, in the way

of his traffick; partly with a view to prevent his marrying Miss Danby, till it should be seen whether her uncle would do any-thing considerable for her: and he was but just returned; and, in order to be allowed to stay at home, had promised his father never to marry without his consent: but nevertheless loved his sister, Mr. Danby said, above all women; and declared that he never would be the husband of any other.

I asked, whether the father had any objections, but those of fortune, to his son's choice; and was answered, No. He *could* have no other, the young man, like a brother, said: there was not a more virtuous and discreet young woman in the kingdom than his sister, though he said it, that should not say it.

Though you say it, that *should* say it. Is not our relation intitled to the same justice that we would do to another?

We must not blame indiscriminately, continued I, all fathers who expect a fortune to be brought into their family, in some measure equivalent to the benefit the new-comer hopes to receive from it; especially in mercantile families, if the young man is to be admitted into a share with his father; who, by the way, *may* have other children—

He has—

Something by way of equivalent for the part he gives up, should be done. Love is a selfish deity. He puts two persons upon preferring their own interests, nay, a gratification of their passion often *against* their interests, to those of every-body else; and reason, discretion, duty, are frequently given up in a competition with it. But love, nevertheless, will not do every-thing for the ardent pair. Parents know this: and ought not to pay for the rashness they wish to prevent, but cannot.

They were attentive. I proceeded, addressing myself to both in the mercantile stile.

Is a father, who, by his prudence, has weathered many a storm, and got safe into port, obliged to re-embark in the voyage of life, with the young folks, who perhaps, in a little while, will consider him as an incumbrance, and grudge him his cabin? Parents (though a young man, I have always thought in this manner) should be indulgent; but children, when they put themselves into one scale, should allow the parent his due weight in the other. You are angry at this father, are you not, my dear Miss Danby?

I said this, to hear what answer she would return.

Indeed I am not. Mr. Galliard knows best his own affairs, and what they require. I have said so twenty and twenty times: and young Mr. Galliard is convinced, that his father is not to be blamed, having other children. And, to own the truth (looking on the floor) we both sit down, and wish together, now-and-then: but what signifies wishing?

My sister will now have two thousand pounds: perhaps when old Mr. Galliard sees, that his son's affections—

Old Mr. Galliard, interrupted I, shall be asked to do nothing inconvenient to himself, or that is not strictly right by his other children: nor shall the niece of my late worthy friend enter into his family, with discredit to herself.

Notice being given, that supper was ready, I took the brother and sister each by the hand; and, entering the parlour with them, Enjoy, said I, the little repast that will be set before you. If it be in my power to make you all three happy, happy you shall be.

It must give great pleasure, my dear Dr. Bartlett, you will believe, to a man of my lively sensations, to

see three very different faces in the same persons, from those they had entered with. I imagined more than once, as the grateful eyes of the sister, and tongues of the brothers, expressed their joy, that I saw my late worthy friend looking down upon us, delighted, and not with disapprobation, upon his choice of an executor, who was determined to supply the defects, which the frailty of human nature, by an over-strong resentment on one hand, and an overflowing gratitude on the other, had occasioned.

I told Mr. Thomas Danby, that besides his legacy, he might reckon upon five thousand pounds, and enter accordingly into treaty for and with his master's niece.

Mr. Edward Danby I commissioned, on the strength of the like additional sum, to treat with the gentleman he had served.

And you, my good Miss Danby, said I, shall acquaint your favoured Mr. Galliard, that, besides the two thousand pounds already yours, you will have five thousand pounds more at his service. And if these sums answer not your full purposes, I expect you will let me know; since, whether they do or not, my respect to the memory of your worthy uncle shall be shewn to the value of more than these three sums to his relations. I never will be a richer man than I ought to be: and you must inform me what other relations you have, and of their different situations in life, that I may be enabled to amend a will made in a long and painful sickness, which might sour a disposition that was naturally all benevolence.

They wept; looked at one another; dried their eyes; and wept again. I thought my presence painful to them; and withdrew to my study; and shut the door, that I might not add to their pain.

At my return—Do you—Do you, referred each brother to the other: and Mr. Thomas Danby getting up to speak, I see, my friends, said I, your

grateful hearts in your countenances. Do you think my pleasure is not, at least, equal to yours? I am *more* than rewarded in the consciousness of having endeavoured to make a right use of the power entrusted to me. You will each of you, I hope (thus set forward) be eminent in his particular business. The merchants of Great Britain are the most useful members of the community. If I have obliged you, let me recommend to you, each in his several way, according to his ability, and as opportunity may offer, to raise those worthy hearts, that inevitable calamities shall make spiritless. Look upon what is done for you, not as the reward of any particular merits in yourselves, but as your debt to that Providence, which makes it a principal part of your religion, to do good to your fellow-creatures. In a word, let me injoin you, in all your transactions, to *remember mercy*, as well as *justice*.

The brothers, with folded hands, declared, that their hearts were opened by the example set them: and they hoped, would never be shut. The sister *looked* the same declaration.

Mr. Sylvester, raised with this scene of gratitude, tears in his honest eyes, said, that he should be impatient till he had looked into his affairs, and through his acquaintance, in order to qualify himself to do some little good, after such a *self-rewarding* example.

If a private man, my dear Dr. Bartlett, could be a means of expanding thus the hearts of four persons, none of them unworthy, what good might not princes, and those who have princely fortunes, do?— Yet, you see, I have done nothing but mere justice. I have not given up any-thing that was my own, before this will give me a power, that perhaps was put into my hands, as a new trial of the integrity of my heart.

But what poor creatures are we, my dear friend, that the very avoiding the occasion of a wrong action should gladden our hearts, as with the consciousness of something meritorious!

At parting, I told the nephews, that I expected to hear from them the moment any-thing should be brought to effect; and let their masters and them agree, or not, I would take the speediest methods that could be fallen upon, to transfer to them, and to their sister, such actions and stocks, as would put them in full possession of what they were intitled to, as well by my promise, as by their uncle's will.

I was obliged to injoin them silence.

Their sister wept; and when I pressed her hand at taking leave of her, gratefully returned the pressure; but in a manner so modest (recollecting herself into some little confusion) that shewed gratitude had possession of her whole heart, and set her above the forms of her sex.

The good attorney, as much raised, as if he were one of the persons benefited, joined with the two brothers in invoking blessings upon me.

So much, my dear Dr. Bartlett, for this night. The past day is a day that I am not displeased with.

LETTER XXXVII.

DR. BARTLETT TO MISS BYRON.

March 18.

I PRESENT to you, madam, the account you desired to see, as extracted by my kinsman from my papers. You seemed to wish it to be hastened for you: it is not what it might have been; but mere facts, I pre-

sume, will answer your intention. Be pleased, therefore, to accept it with your usual goodness.

* *

"Dr. Bartlett went abroad as governor of a young man of quality; Mr. Lorimer, I am to call him, to conceal his real name. He was the very reverse of young Mr. Grandison. He was not only rude and ungovernable; but proud, ill-natured, malicious, even base.

"The doctor was exceedingly averse to take upon him the charge of the wicked youth abroad; having had too many instances of the badness of his nature while in England: but he was prevailed upon by the solicitations of his father (who represented it as an act of the greatest charity to him and his family) as well as by the solemn promises of good behaviour from the young man; for he was known to regard the advice of Dr. Bartlett more than that of any other person.

"The doctor and Mr. Lorimer were at Turin, when young Mr. Grandison (who had been some months in France) for the first time arrived in that city; then in the eighteenth year of his age.

"Dr. Bartlett had not a more profligate pupil, than Mr. Grandison had a governor; though recommended by General W. his uncle by the mother's side. It used to be observed in places where they made but a few days' residence, that the young gentleman ought to have been the governor, Monsieur Creutzer the governed. Mr. Grandison had, in short, the happiness, by his prudence, to escape several snares laid for his virtue, by a wretch, who hoped, if he could betray him into them, to silence the remonstrances of the young man, upon his evil conduct; and to hinder him from complaining of him "isf ather.

Mr. Grandison became acquainted with Dr.

Bartlett at Turin: Monsieur Creutzer, at the same time, commenced an intimacy with Mr. Lorimer; and the two former were not more united from good qualities, than the two former were from bad.

"Several riotous things were done by Creutzer and Lorimer, who, whatever the doctor could do to separate them, were hardly ever asunder. One of their enormities fell under the cognizance of the civil magistrate; and was not made easy to Lorimer without great interest and expence: while Creutzer fled to Rome, to avoid condign punishment; and wrote to Mr. Grandison to join him there.

"Then it was, that Mr. Grandison wrote (as he had often ineffectually threatened to do) to represent to his father the profligacy of the man; and to request him to appoint him another governor; or to permit him to return to England till he had made choice of one for him; begging of Dr. Bartlett, that he would allow him, till he had an answer from his father, to apply to him for advice and instruction.

"The answer of his father was, That he heard of his prudence from every mouth: that he was at liberty to choose what *companion* he pleased: but that he gave him no *governor* but his own discretion.

"Mr. Grandison then, more earnestly than before, and with an humility and diffidence, suited to his natural generosity of temper, that never grew upon indulgence, besought the doctor's direction: and when they were obliged to separate, they established a correspondence, which never will end but with the life of one of them.

"Mr. Grandison laid before the doctor all his plan; submitting his conduct to him, as well with regard to the prosecution of his studies, as to his travels: but they had not long corresponded in this manner, when the doctor let him know, that it was needless to consult him *aforehand*; and the more so,

as it often occasioned a suspension of excellent resolutions: but he besought him to continue to him an account of all he undertook, of all he performed, and of every material incident of his life; not only as his narrations would be matter of the highest entertainment to him; but as they would furnish him with lessons from example, that might be of greater force upon the unhappy Lorimer, than his own precepts.

"While Lorimer was passing through but a few of the cities in Lombardy, Mr. Grandison made almost the tour of Europe; and yet gave himself time to make such remarks upon persons, places, and things, as could hardly be believed to be the observations of so young a man. Lorimer, meantime, was engaged in shews, spectacles, and in the diversions of the places in *which he lived*, as it might be said, rather, than *through which he passed*.

"The doctor, at one time, was the more patient with these delays, as he was willing that the carnival at Venice should be over, before he suffered his pupil to go to that city. But Lorimer, suspecting his intention, slipt thither unknown to his governor, at the very beginning of it; and the doctor was forced to follow him: and when there, had the mortification of *hearing* of him (for the young man avoided his governor as much as possible) as one of the most riotous persons there.

"In vain did the doctor, when he saw his pupil, set before him the example of Mr. Grandison; a much younger man. All the effect which the reading of Mr. Grandison's letters had upon him, was to make him hate the more both his governor and that gentleman. By one of these letters only, did he do himself temporary credit. It was written some months before it was shewn him, and described some places of note through which Mr. Grandison had

passed, and through which the doctor and his charge had also more lately passed. The mean creature contrived to steal it, and his father having often urged for a specimen of his son's observations on his travels, he copied it almost verbatim, and transmitted it as his own to his father; only letting the doctor know, after he had sent it away, that he *had* written.

"The doctor doubted not, but Lorimer had exposed himself; but was very much surprised, when he received a congratulatory letter from the father on his son's improvements, mingled with some little asperity on the doctor, for having set out his son to his disadvantage: 'I could not doubt,' said the fond father, 'that a son of mine had genius: he wanted nothing but to apply.'—And then he gave orders for doubling the value of his next remittance.

"The doctor took the young gentleman to task about it. He owned what he had done, and gloried in his contrivance. But his governor thought it incumbent upon him to undeceive the father, and to save him the extraordinary part of his remittance.

"The young man was enraged at the doctor, for *exposing* him, as he called it, to his father, and for the check he was continually giving to his lawless appetites; and falling into acquaintance with a courtezan, who was infamous for ruining many young travellers by her subtle and dangerous contrivances, they joined in a resolution to revenge themselves on the doctor, whom they considered as their greatest enemy.

"Several projects they fell upon: one in particular, was, to accuse him, by a third hand, as concerning himself with affairs of state in Venice: a crime, which in that jealous republic, is never overlooked, and generally ends fatally for the accused; who, if seized, is hardly ever heard of afterwards.

From this danger he narrowly escaped, by means of his general good character, and remarkable inoffensiveness, and the profligateness of his accusers: nor knew he his danger till many months afterwards. The doctor believes, that he fared the better for being an Englishman, and a governor to the son of a British nobleman, who made so considerable a figure in England; because the Italians in general reap so much advantage from the travellers of this nation, that they are ready to favour and encourage them above those of any other.

"The doctor had been very solicitous to be acquitted of his ungracious charge. In every letter he wrote to England, this was one of his prayers: but still the father, who knew not what to do with his son at home, had besought his patience; and wrote to his son in the strongest terms, after reproaching him for his ungraciousness, to pay an implicit obedience to the doctor.

"The father was a learned man. Great pains had been taken with Lorimer, to make him know something of the ancient Greek and Roman histories. The father was *very* desirous, that his son should see the famous places of old Greece, of which he himself had read so much: and, with great difficulty, the doctor got the young man to leave Venice, where the vile woman, and the diversions of the place, had taken scandalous hold of him.

"Athens was the city, at which the father had desired they would make some stay; and from thence visit other parts of the Morea: and there the young man found his woman got before him, according to private agreement between them.

"It was some time before the doctor found out, that the very woman who had acted so abandoned a part with Lorimer at Venice, was his mistress at Athens: and when he did, he applied, on some fresh

enormities committed by Lorimer, to the tribunal which the Christians have there, consisting of eight venerable men chosen out of the eight quarters of the city, to determine causes among Christians; and they taking cognizance of the facts, the wicked woman suborned wretches to accuse the doctor to the cadi, who is the Turkish judge of the place, as a dangerous and disaffected person; and the cadi being, as it was supposed, corrupted by presents, got the vayvode, or governor, to interfere; and the doctor was seized, and thrown into prison: his Christian friends in the place where forbidden to interpose in his favour; and pen and ink, and all access to him, were prohibited.

"The vile woman, having concerted measures with the persons she had suborned, for continuing the doctor in his severe confinement, set out with her paramour for Venice; and there they rioted as before.

"Mr. Beauchamp, a young man of learning and fine parts, happened to make an acquaintance with Mr. Grandison in the island of Candia, where they met as countrymen, which, from a sympathy of minds, grew immediately into an intimacy that will hardly ever end. This young gentleman, in the course of his travels, visiting Athens, about this time, was informed of the doctor's misfortune, by one of the eight Christians, who constituted the tribunal above-mentioned, and who was an affectionate friend of the doctors, though forbidden to busy himself in his cause: and Mr. Beauchamp (who had heard Mr. Grandison speak of the doctor with an uncommon affection) knowing that Mr. Grandison was then at Constantinople, dispatched a man on purpose, to acquaint him with the affair, and withall the particulars he could get of the case, authenticated as much as the nature of the thing would admit.

"Mr. Grandison was equally grieved and astonished at the information. He instantly applied to the English ambassador at the Porte, as also to the French minister there, with whom he had made an acquaintance: they to the grand vizir: and an order was issued for setting the doctor at liberty. Mr. Grandison, in order to urge the dispatch of the chiaux, who carried it, accompanied him, and arrived at Athens, just as the vayvode had determined to get rid of the whole affair in a private manner (the doctor's finances being exhausted) by the bowstring. The danger endeared the doctor to Mr. Grandison; a relief so seasonable endeared Mr. Grandison to the doctor; to them *both* Mr. Beauchamp, who would not stir from Athens, till he had seen him delivered; having busied himself in the interim, in the best manner he could (though he was obliged to use caution and secrecy) to do him service, and to suspend the fatal blow.

"Here was a cement to a friendship (that had been begun between the young gentlemen from likeness of manners) between them and the doctor, whom they have had the goodness ever since to regard, as their father: and to this day it is one of the doctor's delights to write to his worthy son Beauchamp all that he can come at, relating to the life and actions of a man, whom the one regards as an example, the other as an honour to the human race.

"It was some time before the doctor knew for certain, that the ungracious Lorimer had been consenting to the shocking treatment he had met with; for the wretches whom the vile woman had suborned, had made their escape from Athens before the arrival of Mr. Grandison and the chiaux; the flagitious youth had written to his father, in terms of the deepest sorrow, an account of what had befallen

his governor; and his father had taken the best measures that could be fallen upon at so great distance, for the doctor's succour and liberty: but, in all probability, he would have been lost before those measures could have taken effect.

"Lorimer's father, little thinking that his son had connived at the plot formed against his governor, besought him, when he had obtained his liberty, not to leave his son to his own devices. The doctor, as little thinking then, that Lorimer had been capable of a baseness so very villanous, in compassion both to father and son, went to Venice, and got him out of the hands of the vile woman; and then to Rome: but there, the unhappy wretch continuing his profligate courses, became at last a sacrifice to his dissoluteness; and his death was a deliverance to his family, to the doctor, and to the earth.

"On his death-bed he confessed the plot, which the infamous courtezan had meditated against the doctor at Venice, as well as his connivance at that which she had carried into execution at Athens. He died in horror not to be described; begging for longer life, and promising reformation on that condition. The manner of his death, and the crimes he confessed himself guilty of, by the instigation of the most abandoned of women, besides those committed against his governor, so shocked and grieved the doctor, that he fell ill, and his recovery was long doubtful.

"Mean time Mr. Grandison visited some parts of Asia and Afric, Egypt particularly; corresponding all the time with Dr. Bartlett, and allowing the correspondence to pass into the hands of Mr. Beauchamp; as he did that which he held with Mr. Beauchamp, to be communicated to the doctor.

"When Mr. Grandison returned to Italy, finding there his two friends, he engaged the doctor to

accompany Mr. Beauchamp in that part of his tour into some of the eastern regions, which he himself had been particularly pleased with, and, as he said, wanted to be more particularly informed of: and *therefore* insisted, that it should be taken at his own expence. He knew that Mr. Beauchamp had a step-mother, who had prevailed on his father to take off two-thirds of the allowance he made him on his travels.

"Mr. Beauchamp very reluctantly complied with the condition so generously imposed on him by his beloved friend: another of whose arguments was, that such a tour would be the most likely means to establish the health of a man equally dear to both.

"Mr. Grandison never was at a loss for arguments to keep in countenance the persons whom he benefited; and to make their acceptance of his favours appear not only to be their duty, but an obligation laid on himself.

"Mr. Grandison himself, when the two gentlemen set out on their tour, was engaged in some affairs at Bologna and Florence, which gave him great embarrassment.

"Dr. Bartlett and Mr. Beauchamp visited the principal islands of the Archipelago: after which, the doctor left the young gentleman pursuing his course to Constantinople, with intention to visit some parts of Asia, and took the opportunity of a vessel that was bound for Leghorn, to return thither.

"His health was happily established; and, knowing that Mr. Grandison expected the long-desired call from his father to return to England, and that it was *likely* that he could be of use to his ward Miss Jervois, and her affairs, in her guardian's absence, he was the more desirous to return to Italy.

"Mr. Grandison rejoiced at his arrival; and soon after set out for Paris, in order to attend there the

expected call; leaving Emily, in the interim, to his care.

"Lorimer's father did not long survive his son. He expressed himself in his last hours highly sensible of the doctor's care of his unhappy boy; and earnestly desired his lady to see him handsomely rewarded for his trouble. But not making a will; and the lady having, by her early over-indulgence, ruined the morals of her child (never suffering him to be either corrected or chidden, were his enormities ever so flagrant) she bore a secret grudge to the doctor for his honest representations to her lord of the young man's immoralities: and not even the interposition of a Sir Charles Grandison has hitherto been able to procure the least acknowledgment to the doctor; though the loss as well of his reputation as life, might have been the consequence of the faithful services he had endeavoured to render to the profligate youth, and in him to the whole family."

LETTER XXXVIII.

DR. BARTLETT. IN CONTINUATION.

[*Inclosing the proceeding.*]

THUS far, dear Miss Byron (delight of every one who is so happy as to know you!) reach my kinsman's extracts from my papers. I will add a few particulars in answer to your enquiries about Mr. Beauchamp, if writing of a man I so greatly love, I can write but a few.

Mr. Beauchamp is a fine young man in his person: when I call him a second Sir Charles Grandison,

you and the ladies, and my Lord L. will conceive a very high idea of his understanding, politeness, and other amiable qualities. He is of an ancient family. His father, Sir Harry Beauchamp, tenderly loves him, and keeps him abroad equally against both their wills; especially against Mr. Beauchamp's, now his beloved friend is in England. This is done to humour an imperious, vindictive woman, who, when a widow, had cast her eyes upon the young gentleman for a husband; imagining, that her great wealth (her person not disagreeable) would have been a temptation to him. This, however, was unknown to the father; who made his addresses to her much about the time that Mr. Beauchamp had given an absolute denial (perhaps with too little ceremony) to an overture made to him by a friend of hers. This enraged her. She was resolved to be revenged on him, and knowing him to be absolutely in his father's power, as to fortune, gave way to Sir Harry's addresses; and on her obtaining such terms as in a great measure put both father and son in her power, she married Sir Harry.

She soon gained an absolute ascendant over her husband. The son, when his father first made his addresses to her, was allowed to set out on his travels with an appointment of 600l. a year. She never rested till she had got 400l. a year to be struck off; and the remaining 200l. were so ill remitted, that the young gentleman would have been put to the greatest difficulties, had it not been for the truly friendly assistance of Mr. Grandison.

Yet it is said, that this lady is not destitute of some good qualities, and in cases where the *son* is not the subject, behaves very commendably to Sir Harry: but being a managing woman, and Sir Harry loving his ease, she has made herself his receiver and treasurer; and by that means has put it out of his power

to act as paternally by his son as he is inclined to do, without her knowing it.

The lady and Sir Harry both, however, profess to admire the character of Sir Charles Grandison, from the letters Mr. Beauchamp has written from time to time to his father; and from the general report in his favour: and on this, as well I, as Mr. Beauchamp, found our hope, that if Sir Charles, by some unsuspected way, can make himself personally acquainted with the lady, he will be able to induce her to consent to her son-in-law's recal; and to be reconciled to him; the rather, as there is no issue by this marriage; whose interests might strengthen the lady's animosity.

Mr. Beauchamp, in this hope, writes to Sir Charles that he can, and will, pay all due respect to his father's wife, and, as such, treat her as his mother, if she will consent to his return to his native country: but declares, that he would stay abroad all his life, rather than his father should be made unhappy, by allowing of his coming over against the consent of so high-spirited a woman. In the mean time he proposes to set out from Vienna, where he now is, for Paris, to be near, if Sir Charles, who he thinks can manage any point he undertakes (and who in this, will be seconded by his father's love) can prevail with his mother-in-law.

I long, ladies, to have you all acquainted with this other excellent young man. You, Miss Byron, I am sure, in particular, will admire Sir Charles Grandison's, and my Beauchamp: of spirit so manly, yet of manners so delicate, I end as I began; he is a second Sir Charles Grandison.

I shall think myself, ladies, very happy, if I can find it in my power to oblige you, by any communications you would wish to be made you. But let me once more recommend it to you, Lady L. Lord L.

and Miss Grandison, to throw off all reserves to the most affectionate of brothers. He will have none to you, in cases which he knows will give you pleasure: and if he forbears of his own accord to acquaint you with some certain affairs, it is, because the issue of them is yet hidden from himself.

As to Lady Olivia, mentioned to you by good Lord L. she never can be more to my patron than she now is.

Allow me to be, my good Miss Byron, with a true paternal affection,

Your admirer and humble servant,

AMBROSE BARTLETT.

SUBJOINED IN A SEPARATE PAPER, BY MISS BYRON TO HER LUCY.

How is this, Lucy? Let me collect some of the contents of these letters. "If Sir Charles forbear, of his own accord, to acquaint his sisters with some certain affairs"—"Issue hidden from himself."—"Engaged in some affairs at Bologna and Florence, that embarrass him"—[*Is*, or *was* so engaged, means the doctor?]—"Sir Charles not reserved; yet reserved."—How is all this, Lucy?

But does the doctor say, "That I shall particularly admire Mr. Beauchamp?"—What *means* the doctor by that?—But he cannot affront me so much as to mean any-thing but to shew his own love to the worthy young man. The doctor longs for us to see him: if I do see him, he must come quickly: for shall I not soon return to my last, my best refuge, the arms of my indulgent grandmamma and aunt?—I shall.

But, dear Lucy, have you any spite in you? Are you capable of malice—*deadly* malice?—If you are, sit down and wish the person you hate to be in

love with a man (I must, it seems, speak out) whom she thinks, and every-body knows, to be superior to herself, in every quality, in every endowment, both of mind and fortune; and be doubtful (far, far worse is *doubtful* than *sure!*) among some faint glimmerings of hope, whether his affections are engaged; and if they are not, whether he can return —Ah, Lucy! you know what I mean—Don't let me speak out.

But one word more—Don't you think the doctor's compliment at the beginning of this letter, a little particular?—"Delight of EVERY-ONE who is so happy as to know you." Charming words!—But are they, or are they not, officiously inserted?—Am I the delight of Sir Charles Grandison's heart? Does *he* not know *me*?—Weak, silly, vain, humble, low, yet proud Harriet Byron!—Begone, paper—mean confession of my conjecturing folly—Ah, Lucy, I tore the paper half through, as you'll see, in anger at myself; but I will stitch it to the doctor's letter, to be taken off by you, and to be seen by nobody else.

END OF VOL. X.

T. Davison, Printer, Lombard-street,
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